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G.C. NAYAK

# MĀYĀVĀDA
## AN APPROACH FROM ĀCĀRYA'S POINT OF VIEW

Māyā in the Vedāntic tradition has been generally taken as an explanatory principle by which the origination of the world is supposed to have been explained. Although Brahman is regarded as the world-ground, Māyā as the indeterminable power of Brahman is supposed to be at the root cause of this apparent multiplicity. Some Advaitins have gone so far as to claim that Māyā is the *vikāri-upādāna* or the changeable material cause of this world. Some others, while admitting that it is neither an entity nor a non-entity, neither identical with Brahman nor different from it, have been impressed by its positive character of producing delusion and have referred to it as something positive, *bhāvarūpa*.[1] We find Advaitins of great calibre even referring to Avidyā as existing like the supreme Self, as it were. Sureśvara, for example, makes a striking declaration thus: *aho dhārṣṭyam avidyāyā na kaścid ativartate, pramāṇaṃ vastvanādṛtya paramātmeva tiṣṭhati.*[2]

However the word *iva* used here could be taken to mean that Māyā does not have a status alongside Paramātman. Māyā being a positive entity has also been taken simply to mean that it is not absolutely negative. But even admitting all this, it is a fact that the followers of Śaṅkara have alluded to Māyā as a queer power of the Lord or Brahman which is antagonistic to all logic and reasoning and is the root cause of all multiplicity. Even *ajñāna* has been regarded as the stuff of the world, Brahman being unchangeable cannot be the cause. Consistent with this trend in later Advaita, we find certain controversies being raised amidst the Advaitins regarding the locus and the object [*āśraya* and *viṣaya*] of avidyā, whether Māyā and avidyā are one and the same, or different from each other and whether avidyā is one or many in number. We are again told of the *āvaraṇa* and *vikṣepa*, that is, the covering or the hiding, and the distorting powers of avidyā, the impression being created in mind, that avidyā is an entity having such and such powers. Taking the clue from the longstanding Advaita tradition of the past, both the critics and admirers of Advaita in the contemporary period have also regarded Māyā as an explanatory principle of world-multiplicity. It is no wonder that the admirers have been flabbergasted and stunned by their finding that Māyā as an explanatory theory is of very little worth and rather of no consequence, being only deceptive in appearance, while the critics have too easily caught hold of this weakest spot in the Advaita and have taken it easily to task for subscribing to such worthless hypothesis for explaining the world. It is thus that even great Advaitins of the present century like Radhakrishnan have referred to the theory of Māyā serving in the Advaita context "as a cloak to cover the inner rifts of

his [Śaṅkara] system".[3] Prof. Dasgupta points out that "the Vedānta is both unwilling and incapable of explaining the nature of the World-process in all its details, in which philosophy and science are equally interested".[4] This problem has really become too difficult and even somewhat impossible on the part of Advaitins either to solve or dissolve. One can of course cut the gordian knot by pointing out in the language of some famous Advaitins that Māyā implies what is inconsistent, and that had it been consistent and explainable concept, it would be reality and not Māyā.[5] But this approach will not do because it is difficult to understand how a concept or a principle which is inconsistent and not itself explainable can satisfactorily work as an explanatory theory of the origination of the world. It is like an attempt to explain a mystery with the help of a greater and more intricate mystery. No wonder, therefore, that Advaita theory of Māyā has been taken as explaining the universe away, rather than giving an explanation of the world order.

The malaise is indeed grave, and a superficial treatment of the situation will definitely not do. To my mind, it appears that the whole situation has been looked at from the wrong angle and hence the irresolvable difficulty naturally confronts us in our face. The entire programme of Śaṅkara, to my mind has been represented with an exaggerated emphasis on certain aspects, by his own followers, not to speak of his opponents. It is however, to be admitted that in the process, much of philosophical ingenuity, and even excellence, has also been displayed by the brilliant followers of the Ācārya, betraying their innovative ability at the same time. Śaṅkara was not at all interested in giving an

explanation of the origin of the universe. As far as he is concerned, Philosophy has nothing to do with cosmology or cosmogony, and it is entirely useless, according to him, to indulge in the enticing stories of creation.[6] In his *Aitareya-Bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara is quite explicit in pointing out that different theories of creation are to be taken as mere anecdotes and stories (*akhyāyikā*), and are therefore to be taken only as *arthavāda*. According Śaṅkara, Philosophy is neutral to any theory of creation and has got nothing to do with an explanation of the world process. So there is no question in Śaṅkara, giving or trying to give an explanation of the origin of universe through Māyā. When Māyā was not meant to be a theory of explanation, the question of adequacy as a theory does not arise. If it were meant to be a theory it would be one of the worst theories perhaps, for, instead of explaining, it would simply shift the problem from the mystery of creation to the mystery of the creator.

It is true that Saṅkara, at a number of places speaks of Māyā as the power of the Lord.[7] But this to my mind is simply a concession on the part of Śaṅkara, to the popular view and nothing more, for the entire conception according to him is *avidyā-kalpita* and is therefore, to be understood on the level of *loka-vyavahāra* alone. It is Śaṅkara's view that even the Lord depends as Lord upon the limiting adjuncts of name and form, the products of nescience.[8] When conception of the Lord itself has its basis in ignorance, then the ascription of Māyā to the Lord as his *śakti* can only belong to the sphere of ignorance. We have to admit that Vidyāraṇyasvāmī had a rare insight into this Vedāntic truth, when we find him giving beautiful poetic expression to this idea as follows: *māyākhyāyāḥ kāmadhenor vatsau jīveśvarāv*

*ubhau yatheccham pibatāṃ dvaitam. tattvaṃ tv advaitam eva hi.*[9] Māyā is a desire fulfilling cow indeed from this point of view.

Ignorance or avidyā consists in the confusion of regarding one non-dual reality as many.[10] Ignorance pervades out entire commence of life, according to Śaṅkara. Our ordinary language which is practically oriented reflects this ignorance. We classify, categorize and ascribe predicates to one non-dual reality for our practical purposes; the non-dual reality however, remains untouched by these classifications, categorization or ascriptions.[11] Ignorance of this non-dual reality is natural, all-pervasive, affecting one and all, and this universality of ignorance is at times expressed in the terminology of Māyā by Śaṅkara. In his *Kaṭhopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, for example, Śaṅkara speaks of Māyā as deep-rooted, incomprehensible, and strange only in the sense that every one though identical with non-dual reality continues to remain ignorant of this identity.[12] The fact that every one sees multiplicity where there is unity, is deceived by various linguistic forms which have only practical value (*vyāvahārika*) is called Māyā. This is what is a natural tendency on the part of *jīva*, according to Śaṅkara.[13] The further questions such as - to whom in particular does this Māyā belong or wherefrom does it originate? - are simply irrelevant. One word of caution here: This ignorance and its consequent error are not to be regarded as merely linguistic.

There has been recently a tendency to interpret avidyā or adhyāsa as simply a linguistic error.[14] This is misleading. Language does not necessarily create the illusion of which Śaṅkara speakes, nor is it a fact that the confusion is merely verbal. Hence to speak of avidyā

or adhyāsa as linguistic is quite misleading. Expressions such as *tat tvam asi* or *aham brahmāsmi*, when properly understood, can lead to 'freedom from ignorance' or Mokṣa, according to Śaṅkara. It is true that ordinary language reflects this ignorance but this is only in case of those who take ordinary language to be revealing the nature of ultimate reality, that is to say, only in so far as the ordinary language is taken to be something more than *vyāvahārika*. A philosophically enlightened person may use the same language knowing fully well that this is of practical value and all the while he is never misled by the distinction created by ordinary language.[15] Bondage or error due to ignorance is deep-rooted and all-pervasive, according to Śaṅkara, and in this sense it may be regarded as a natural and universal feature of *jīva*, but it will be misleading to call it simply a linguistic error or a linguistic bondage. Bondage or error consists in regarding the non-dual (*advaita*) as many, according to Advaita Vedānta, and this is reflected in our entire commerce of life including our ordinary linguistic usage and Mokṣa consists in freedom from this bondage. Vidyā in Śaṅkara Vedānta is *vastusvarūpāvadhāraṇa* 'ascertainment of the nature of reality'. *Vastusvarūpāvadhāraṇa* or the ascertainment of the nature of reality is not a mere linguistic illumination; the issue is ontological, not merely linguistic. The answer to the question whether Māyā is identical with avidyā or different from it should be quite simple from the stand-point of Śaṅkara, although it is a fact that the later Śaṅkarites have raised a storm over this issue. When we refer to the ignorance or error of someone in particular we may speak of him as being affected by avidyā. When on the other hand we are required to point to the ignorance as it affects all in a mass scale,

there is nothing wrong in speaking of the whole World being under the spell of a universal magic (Māyā) as it were, so long as we remember that any further reference to a magician (God) wielding this magical power is only to be understood within that framework. If ignorance is universal and all-pervasive this is as good as being under the magical spell of the power of ignorance and if Māyā is conceived as a magical power there should be a Māyāvī 'wielder of the magical power'. Naturally, this Māyā should have no power over the Māyāvī although it may affect all others, and in this respect it may be distinguished from avidyā or ignorance of the individual. But all this is picture-thinking - one picture leading to another which may be of value only in so far as it clarifies the point that there is an all pervasive ignorance which seems to have a compelling character about it. This does not however permit us to delight in further speculation about its source and its relation to individual ignorance (avidyā), for that will be entering into what Śaṅkara would call the domain of *utprekṣā* (metaphysics - a look beyond) which he denounces in clear terms. The talk of Māyā or magical power of God in Śaṅkara Vedānta is only an indirect way of saying that every one is numbed and dumbfounded as it were by the compelling ignorance which creates multiplicity.[16] The conception of Māyā as an 'indefinable mysterious stuff', as Prof. Dasgupta calls it,[17] might have found a place in the later Advaita; it certainly has no place in writings of Ācārya himself.

Similarly, coming to avidyā, we find that the controversies in later Advaita schools regarding the object and locus (*viṣaya* and *āśraya*) of avidyā have no place in the writings of the master himself. He is simply

interested in pointing to an avidyā or ignorance which is all pervasive and on which our entire commerce of life is based, to the fact that distinctions are created by ignorance where naturally there is no non-duality. What is important from his point of view is to detect this error, this confusion created by ignorance and to try to get rid of it through the realization of non-duality. It is therefore, pointless to ask, to whom in particular does ignorance belong? Whether the error is mine, yours, or has its origination under the supervision of a supervisor called God? That the question is not philosophically significant is evident from the frivolity with which the Ācārya set aside the whole issue in his *Gītābhāṣya*. One who raises such questions has simply missed the programme of Advaita philosophy to that extent for the genetic and metaphysical questions leading to a sort of picture thinking are of no concern to the philosopher. We must learn to discriminate between philosophically relevant and irrelevant issues in Advaita by taking the clue from the Ācārya himself whose remarks such as: *avidyā kasya dṛśyate iti prśno nirarthakaḥ*,[18] (it is pointless to ask such questions as 'In whom is avidyā seen'?) are extremely significant and pregnant with implications. In the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* also Ācārya clearly points out how any reference to avidyā does not affect the non-duality of the self on the *Pāramārthika* level. As avidyā has got no independent status at all in the *pāramārthika* plane, the question regarding its locus, etc. has no relevance there; it is only when one is ignorant that the question about the locus of avidyā may arise and in that case ignorance or avidyā obviously belongs to the person concerned. It is to be noted that according to Ācārya, there is nothing mystical, mysterious or even metaphysical about this question of the

locus of avidyā in any case. It would be worth while here to concentrate on the exact words of the Ācārya in his *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya* in this context in order to get a clear idea about this question.[19] One of the main, very first one of the *anupapattis* or objections raised by Rāmānujācārya against Advaita Vedantā, viz., the *āśrayānupapatti*, regarding the locus of avidyā would be simply out of place, rather irrelevant, in that case.

Above all, the following remarks made by Swami Vivekananda long back in his lectures delivered in London seem to me to be most illuminating in connection with the Māyāvāda of Śaṅkara, and could be taken as a guide-line for our understanding of the doctrine of Māyā in its right perspective. "Māyā", says Vivekananda with rare insight, "is not a theory for the explanation of the world; it is simply a statement of facts as they exist, that the very basis of our being is contradiction, that everywhere we have to move through this tremendous contradiction".[20] It reminds us of the famous statement of Ācārya himself in the *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya*: *satyānṛte mithunīkṛtya aham idam mamaidam iti naisargiko 'yaṃ lokavyavahāraḥ*. In *Māṇḍūkya-bhāṣya*, Ācārya has explicitly pointed out that avidyā is the very nature of the things as they obtain and beyond this nothing can be said by the way of explaining why and how non-dual Reality appears as the world of multiplicity: *na hi avidyā svabhāvavyatirekeṇa rajjvādīnāṃ sarpādyābhāsatvakaraṇaṃ śakyaṃ vaktum*,[21] says Ācārya. Here again, avidyā refers to the very *svabhāva* or nature of things as they are and here also Ācārya indicates that there is no question of treating Māyā or avidyā as an explanatory theory.

## REFERENCES


1. Cf. *Citsukhī*, 1.13: *anādibhāvarūpaṃ yad vijñānena vilīyate tad ajñānam iti prajñālakṣaṇaṃ sampracakṣate.*
2. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, III.111.
3. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. II.
4. S.N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 1952, vol. II, p. 73.
5. Cf. Maṇḍanamiśra, *Brahmasiddhi: anupapadyamānārthaiva hi māyā; upapadyamānārthatve yathārthabhāvaṃ na māyā syāt.* Cf. also Vimuktātman, *Iṣṭasiddhi*: *durghaṭatvam avidyāyā bhūṣaṇaṃ na tu dūṣaṇam.* And also *na hi māyāyām asambhāvanīyaṃ nāma asambhāvanīyavadābhasacaturā hi sā.*
6. Cf. *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, 2.I.27: *na ceyaṃ pariṇāmaśrutiḥ pariṇāmapratipādanārthā, tatpratipattau phalānavagamāt.* Also: *na hi sṛṣṭyākhyāyikādiparijñānāt kiñcit phalam iṣyate, aikātmyapratipattes tu amṛtatvaṃ phalaṃ sarvopaniṣatprasiddham.*
7. Cf. *avyaktanamnī parameśaśaktir-*
   *anādyavidyā triguṇātmikā parā/*
   *kāryānumeyā sudhiyaiva māyā*
   *yayā jagat sarvam idaṃ prasūyate// Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 108.
   Cf. also: *Saundaryalaharī*, 97: *mahāmāyā viśvaṃ bhramayasi parabrahmamahiṣi.*
8. Cf. *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*: *avidyākṛta-nāmarūpopādhyanurodhīśvaro bhavati.*
9. Cf. *Pañcadaśī*, VI.236.
10. Cf. *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya* (1.1.1): *atasmiṃs tadbuddhiḥ.*
11. Cf. ibid.: *yatra yad adhyāsaḥ tatkṛtena doṣeṇa guṇena vā aṇumātreṇāpi sa na sambadhyate.*
12. Cf. *Kaṭhopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, 1.3.12: *aho atigambhīrā duravagāhyā vicitrā māyā ceyaṃ yad ayaṃ sarvo jantuḥ paramārthataḥ paramārthasatattvo 'py evaṃ bodhyamāno 'ham paramātmeti na gṛhṇāti, anātmānaṃ dehendriyādisaṃghātam ātmano dṛśyamānam api ghaṭādivad ātmatvenāham amuṣyaputra ity anucyamāno 'pi gṛhṇāti.*
13. Cf. *Adhyāsa-bhāṣya: naisargiko 'yaṃ lokavyavahāraḥ.*

14. Cf. G. Misra, *Analytical Studies in Indian Philosophical Problems*, Bhubaneswar, 1971 and *The Advaita Conceptions of Philosophy: Its Method, Scope and Limits.*
15. Cf. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya: na yathāpūrvaṃ saṃsaritaṃ śakyaṃ darśayitum.* Also Cf. *Pañcadaśī*, XI.130: *vibhāṣābhijñavad vidyād ubhau laukikavaidikau.*
16. Cf. *Kaṭhopaniṣad-bhāṣya*, 1.3.12, where Śaṅkara, immediately after describing māyā as *atigambhīrā duravagāhyā vicitrā* in so far as we fail to realise the identity of the self with Brahman while identifying ourselves with the not-self, points to māyā as the power of the Lord that deludes the entire world – *nūnaṃ parasyaiva māyayā momuhyamānaḥ sarvo loko 'yaṃ bambhramīti.*
17. Cf. Dasgupta, op.cit. p. 73.
18. Cf. Gītā-bhāṣya, 13.2.
19. Cf. *kasya punar ayam aprabodha iti cet, yas tvaṃ pṛcchasi tasya te - iti vadāmaḥ. nanu aham īśvara evoktaḥ śrutyā, yady evaṃ pratibuddho 'si, nāsti kasyacid aprabodhaḥ. yo 'pi doṣaś codyate – kaiścid avidyayā kila ātmanaḥ sadvitīyatvāt advaitānupapattir iti, so 'pi etena pratyuktaḥ*, Brahmasūtra-bhāṣyā, 4.1.3.
20. Cf. Swami Vivekananda, *Jñāna-Yoga*, Advaita Ashrama, Almora, Sixth edn., 1943, p. 64.
21. Cf. *Māṇḍūkya-bhāṣya, Agāma-prakaraṇa*, 9.

SINDHU S. DANGE

# COLOUR AWARENESS IN VEDIC RITUAL TRADITION

Enchanting effect of colours on the ancient mind can be marked in many a ṛc which are replete with beautiful images. The goddess Dawn (Uṣas) leading a white eye-bewitching horse, i.e. the sun,[1] the golden-handed god Savitṛ,[2] the deity Apāṃ Napāt, when identified with the sacrificial fire, with his golden hue (because of the colour of his flames) and golden-coloured food (i.e. yellowish ghee, obviously from cow's milk)[3] and the bright Dawns concealing the black (*asita*) monster (of darkness)[4] can be cited as some of the beautiful coloured word-pictures presented by the Ṛgvedic seers.

This awareness of colours, however, has definite dimensions and purposes when it enters the sphere of ritual. And this is specifically what the paper attempts at. The awareness of specific colours can be noted in the context of animal-sacrifices, intended to fulfil the particular desires. A person desirous of attaining prosperity should offer (*ālabheta*) a white beast (i.e. goat)

to Vāyu (TaittSam. II.1.1.1).[5] The verb *ālabheta* means 'should seize' or 'should take hold of '; but as this seizing is for offering or sacrificing, it is translated hence forth as 'should offer'. Here white colour of the beast seems to be connected to prosperity. In the rite of building the Great Fire-altar (Agnicayana), a horse is made to smell a layer of bricks to be used for building this altar. This horse has to be white, for it is a form of the sun which burns yonder (ŚatBr. VII.3.2.16). In the Rājasūya sacrifice, having offered the oblations at the dwelling places of the *ratnin-s* (various personalities, which are regarded as the 'jewels of the kingdom'), he offers a pap (*caru*) to Soma and Rudra. It is cooked in milk from a white cow, which has a white calf. A mythical account stated here points out that when the *asura* Svarbhānu struck the sun with darkness and the latter did not shine. Soma and Rudra were the deities to remove his darkness. In the Rājasūya sacrifice, the king also enters darkness when he brings some of the unworthy officials (to whom the offerings are given in the rite mentioned above) they being of śūdra or low caste, in contact with the sacrifice. Soma and Rudra remove the king's darkness and make him consecrated (ŚatBr. V.3.2.1-2). The pap to them cooked in milk from a white cow having a white calf, indicates the total extinction of (black) darkness in the case of the king, who is to be consecrated and also suggests his radiance like that of the sun after the performance of the Rājasūya sacrifice. A white horse is given as *dakṣiṇā* 'sacrificial fee' in the Sadyaskrī sacrifice. Sadyaskrī sacrifice is an *ekāha* 'one-day' Soma-sacrifice at which the consecrations, buying and purchasing of Soma are compressed into one day.[6] A mythical account occurring in the ŚatBr. states that when the Aṅgiras-es officiated

as priests for the Āditya-s in the Sadyaskrī sacrifice, to them was offered Vāc as *dakṣiṇā*, which they refused to accept. Sūrya (the sun) then was offered to them as *dakṣiṇā*. Hence in the Sadyaskrī sacrifice, a white horse stands as the *dakṣiṇā* (SatBr. III.5.1.17-20). It is said that he who desires splendour, should offer a white cow (*śvetāṃ vaśām*) to Sūrya, for then he has recourse to Āditya. It is said that when Āditya did not shine, the gods offered a white cow to Sūrya and thereby restored the brilliance of Āditya (TaittSam. II.1.8.1). Here obviously Āditya and Sūrya are shown as different from each other. The TaittSam. lays down that a person desirous of the splendour of brahman (*brahmavarcasakāmaḥ*) should offer to Bṛhaspati, a *vaśā* (cow) with white back (ibid. II.1.7.2). Here the white colour is associated with lustre or splendour. A white beast (goat) with black neck (*kṛṣṇagrīvam*)[7] is to be offered to Agni and a brown one to Soma by a brāhmaṇa who in spite of his study does not win. The beast (goat) with black neck drives away darkness from the brāhmaṇa and being white, bestows brilliance on him (ibid. II.1.2.8,9). The brown-coloured beast offered to Soma bestows splendour and radiance on that brāhmaṇa (ibid. II.1.2.9). The significance of the brown colour will be discussed later. To turn to white colour again, this colour seems to be of great importance in other countries as well as in some tribes. In Europe the king of the snakes is said to be white. (This can be compared with the concept of Śeṣa, the great serpent in the Hindu mythology, which is also white in colour). White horses were regarded especially sacred. In Japan white animals have a high importance and great fortune for the house is inferred from their appearance. In Indo-China the cult of the white elephant is well-known.[8] White animals were

often preferred as a victim. The Woguls offer a white horse in autumn and the Shans of Annam sacrifice a white buffalo annually. The Battas also select white victims. White animals were thought for being sacrificed for sun-shine.[9]

To turn to black colour, it is said that a person desirous of rain should offer to Prajāpati, a black-coloured beast (goat), having spots on its body and low (i.e. bent) horns. The black colour of the beast is said to be the form of rain. Its having the spots is supposed to produce lightning and shed rain. With its bent horns, it brings the rain down to the earth for the person offering it (ŚatBr. II.1.8.5). Here the image is clearly of the rain phenomenon, for the black-coloured beast having spots on its skin stands for the rain-cloud, having streaks of lightning shedding the rain-drops. This clearly is sympathetic magic, for the black beast imitates the black rainy cloud and on the principle, viz. 'like produces like', is believed to bring rain. This becomes all the more patent when the sacrifice named Kārīrīṣṭi is taken into consideration.[10] The materials which are required for this sacrifice are: a black garment, an upper garment with black border, a black horse, a black fetter, a hide of a black antelope, black honey (i.e. honey gathered by *puttikā* bees), flour of *karīra* fruits (*karīra* is a thorny plant growing in deserts and fed upon by camels), a black pitcher which is half-baked, a black cart with three roofs (*gadhā-s*), a black female sheep a black bunch of Varsahu faggot and sacrificial grass of reed (*vetasa*). The *dakṣiṇā* to be given in this sacrifice, consists of a black garment, a black horse and a black female sheep. It is quite obvious that the black colour of the things used in this sacrifice are for inducing the black rainy clouds to shower rains, on the basis of

sympathetic magic. With this in view, the Wambugwes of East Africa offer a black sheep and a black calf when they want rain and the Garos of Assam offer a black goat on the top of a very high mountain in times of drought.[11] In the Rājasūya sacrifice, while giving offering to the goddess Nirṛti, the *dakṣiṇā* to be given is a black garment torn at the end (MaitSam. II.6.3). It is significant to note that here the black colour is associated with the goddess Nirṛti, which is a deity presiding over sin, misfortune and death (*pāpābhimānini devatā*). The MaitSam. states that a person desirous of rain should offer a spotted (female beast) sacred to Agni and Maruts. Agni eulogizes rain from here and the Maruts release it (from sky). This female beast is spotted (*pṛśniḥ*), for the Maruts have Pṛśniḥ 'the spotted Sky-cow' as their mother (MaitSam. II.5.7). In this connection, it will be interesting to take a note of another female beast, which is black-spotted. Such a black-spotted female beast (*kṛṣṇaśabalīm*) sacred to Earth (Bhūmi) is to be offered by a person desirous of food (ibid. II.5.7). Here food is obviously corn or rich crop. According to Dange, probably this is in view of the patches of dark green trees and standing corn-stalk. Though these are not strictly black, there is no other way to symbolize the dark green colour in a beast except black.[12] In the rite of building the Great Fire-altar (Agnicayana), when Agni is about to be laid on the fire-altar, he gives offering to Agni with milk from a black cow, which has a white calf. The black cow with a white calf is the night and the white calf is the yonder sun (ŚatBr. IX.2.3.30). In a special animal-sacrifice, a *vaśā* (cow) of two forms (according to Sāyaṇa, 'a cow of two colours') is to be offered to Mitra and Varuṇa by a person desirous of offspring (TaittSam. II.19.7.3). Though

not mentioned here specifically, this cow seems to be of two colours, viz. white and black, for it is said that the day (meaning light, i.e. here white colour) stands for the deity Mitra and the night (meaning darkness, i.e. here the black colour) stands for Varuṇa (ibid. II.1.7.3, 4). A dusky-coloured cow is chosen for being the Anustaraṇī cow. This cow is called Anustaraṇī (fr. *anu* + √*stṛ* 'to place on'), for it is immolated sacrificially and its limbs are placed on the limbs of the dead *āhitāgni* (the sacrificer who maintains the three fires) and the omentum on the face of that *āhitāgni*. Such a cow is aged, scurvy and hornless or a dusky one, of two years with shorter fore-legs (TāṇḍMBr. XXI.1.7). Here the dusky colour suits the purpose for which it is employed and thus may indicate inauspiciousness.

To turn to tawny (*babhru*) colour, we have already seen that this colour is believed to bestow splendour and radiance. A *babhru* (accroding to Keith as also Eggeling 'brown', and accroding to Macdonell 'ruddy brown')[13] beast (goat) is to be offered to Soma by a person desirous of food, for such a beast procures food for him, as *babhru* is the colour of food and also of Soma (TaittSam. II.1.3.3, 4). Soma is rightly said to be of *babhru* colour, while food can be of multiple colours. And this is verily indicated by the TaittSam. when it says that a *vaśā* (cow) of many forms (accroding to Sāyaṇa, having many colours, taking the word *rūpa* for 'colour' and not form) is to be offered to All Gods (Viśve Devāḥ) by a person desiring for food (ibid. II.1.7.5). The Somakrayaṇī cow (a cow giving which Soma is purchased) is said to be of *babhru* (tawny) colour and having red-brown eyes (*piṅgākṣī*) (ŚatBr. III.3.1.13-15).

To turn to red colour, a person desirous of brahmanlustre (*brahmavarcasakāmaḥ*) should offer a red

(*rohiṇīm*) female beast to Bṛhaspati. This beast becomes for him the aspect of brahman for prosperity (MaitSam. II.5.7). In the case of a beast, it is difficult to imagine a purely red colour. Hence it can be reddish. The TaittSam. in the context of the special animal-sacrifices (which are performed for fulfilling various desires), states that when the *vaṣaṭkāra* (sound *vaṣaṭ*) cleft the head of the metre Gāyatrī, the sap thereof fell away three times, giving rise to three different coloured cows. The blood of Gāyatrī became a fierce red (*rohiṇī*) *vaśā* (cow). This cow is to be offered to Rudra by a person, who practises witch-craft (TaittSam. II.1.7.1). The *rohiṇī* cow is said to belong to Vṛtra-killer (ŚatBr. III.3.1.14). Such a reddish cow (*rohiṇī*) with reddish-white eyes (*śyetākṣī*) is said to belong to the *pitṛ-s* (Fathers) and is to be sacrificed to them (ibid. III.3.1.14). In the case of not getting a Somakrayaṇī cow, which we have noted earlier, a dark red cow (*aruṇā*) can be secured for being the Somakrayaṇī cow. But the cow belonging to the *pitṛ-s* should not be used as a Somakrayaṇī cow (ibid. III.3.1.15).

The Sūryā-hymn in RV speaks of the garment of the bride, which is of black and red colour and is believed to be haunted by the evil spirit called Kṛtyā. This garment is to be given away, lest the female evil spirit, obtaining feet should enter the body of the bride-groom, i.e. husband (RV. X.85.28, 29). This garment of the bride is the one, she wears on the night of the consummation of marriage. The *Atharvaveda* also refers to the bride's garment (AV. XIV.1.25-27). The ĀśvGS. (I.8.13) and ĀpGS. (III. 9. 11) mention the rite of giving away the bride's garment after the marriage ritual, obviously on the day after the night of the consummation of

marriage. The same instruction occurs in the SkandaP., where it is said that the *nīlī-rakta* garment (i.e. the garment dyed with black colour or is of black and red colour, keeping in tune with the Ṛgvedic *nīlalohita* garment) of the woman is to be thrown away at a distance. Such a garment, however, is not inauspicious at the time of love-sports in the bed (IV.40.142). It is probable that the black and red colours were used to attract the attention of the evil spirits, which are later on vanquished by a *mantra*. This problem of giving away the garment of the bride has been discussed by the present writer elsewhere.[14]

It is interesting to note that this same awareness of colours is marked also in the sphere of metals. The metal often mentioned and made use of in the ritual context is gold, which figures here due to its shining yellow colour, getting itself directly connected to the sun and Agni.[15] Some occasions in the ritual context, when the use of gold is enjoined can be cited here. In the Sadyaskrī sacrifice, in front of the white horse which is given as *dakṣiṇā*, a golden ornament is placed, whereby an image (as though) is made of him, that shines yonder (ŚatBr. III.5.1.20). The *vasatīvarī* water (which is to be collected on the earlier day of the sacrifice) is enjoined to be taken from a flowing current before the setting of the sun, the idea there being that such water catches the rays, i.e. lustre, of the sun. In the event of such water not obtained, he can take water while holding a piece of gold close above it, thereby making it like the burning yonder sun (ibid. III.9.2.9). In the context of expiations, it is enjoined that if the fire were to go out after the first libation has been offered, he may offer on any log of wood (on the fire-place) or he may offer upon

gold, for gold is Agni's seed. It is said that father is the same as the son and the son is the same as father (ibid. XII.4.3.1). These examples aptly bring out how due to its shining yellow colour, gold is brought on par with the sun as also Agni. Another metal significant for its colour is silver, which turns black or assumes the ash colour. A ritual detail from the AitBr. is to be noted in this connection. The AitBr. while enjoining expiations for errors in the Agnihotra, such as – if the sun rises or sets on a man's fire before it is taken out, or if being taken forward it dies out before the oblation – says that he should place gold in front when taking the fire out in the evening, for gold being pure light is the yonder sun. Then having interposed silver (*rajatam*), he should take the fire out in the morning; for, silver is the symbol of the night (AitBr. VII.12 = 32.11). Thus when the yonder sun is not there in the evening, shining yellow gold serves the purpose of the sun. Again when the night has disappeared in the morning, silver serves the purpose of the night. It is quite patent that this expiation is enjoined, taking into account the colours of these two metals.

From the above information about colours from the Vedic ritual texts, the following points could be arrived at –

1. White colour stands for prosperity and for brilliance, hence for the sun.

2. Black colour stands for a rainy cloud and also for the night. It is also associated with the goddess Nirṛti.

3. Yellow colour stands for the blazing Agni as well as the shining yonder sun. It is the colour of gold.

4. Tawny colour (may be due to its having the basis of the yellow colour) stands for Soma, food and lustre.

5. Red colour is used generally for warding off evil or for practising witch-craft, though it is not regarded as an inauspicious colour. Hence it is used in the rite of the purchasing Soma or getting the *brahman* lustre.

The same awareness of colours is observed in the tradition of the domestic rituals. The ĀśvGS states that the ground to be chosen for building a house, by a *brāhmaṇa* should be of white colour, of red colour by a *kṣatriya* and of yellow colour by a *vaiśya* (ĀśvGS. II.8.6-8). The GobhGS however differs in the case of a *vaiśya*, saying that for him the ground should be of black colour (IV.7.7). Here white colour signifies the spiritual lustre of a *brāhmaṇa*, red colour indicates the martial spirit of a *kṣatriya* and yellow colour shows the rich (ripened) crop as also the abundance of yellow ghee (made from cow's milk) enjoyed by a *vaiśya*. The black colour pointed out in the case of a *vaiśya* by the GobhGS indicates the land tilled by the *vaiśya*. The *vaiśya* is assigned the works, viz. agriculture, tending the cows and trading. Hence the yellow colour or the black colour (as per the GobhGS) perfectly goes with him. Similar discrimination is marked when the clothes for the initiates of the three *varṇa-s* are prescribed. The ĀśvGS enjoys that in case these initiates wear clothes, they should wear the dyed ones. A *brāhmaṇa* should wear a reddish yellow (*kaṣāya*) garment; that of a *kṣatriya* should be a *māñjiṣṭha* (dyed red with madder) one and that of a *vaiśya* be a yellow (*hāridra*) one (ĀśvGS. I.19.9). In later period, the VarāhaP mentions these three colours for the umbrella

to be used by these three *varṇa-s* though as per tradition, umbrella is taboo for the initiate. For a *brāhmaṇa*-initiate is prescribed umbrella of white colour, for a *kṣatriya*-initiate umbrella of red colour and for a *vaiśya*-initiate umbrella of yellow colour. The VarāhaP prescribes the rite of initiation also for a *śūdra* (VarP. chap. 127-128). A cloth of *nīla* (blue or black) colour is prescribed for a *śūdra* and also a bluish black (*nīla*) umbrella.[16]

In the Sūtra-tradition (GobhGS. III.2.7-46; KhāGS. II.5.23ff.) a student observing one of the *Veda-vrata-s* (vows) named Mahānāmnī, has to wear clothes of dark (i.e. black) colour and partake of dark food. Kane has pointed out that the virtue of the Mahānāmnī *vrata* is centred in water.[17] This is seen from the observances laid down for that student. He is required to bathe thrice a day, not to seek shelter when it is raining and not to cross a river without bathing in it. The Mahānāmnī verses (AitĀr. IV; JaimSam of the *Sāmaveda* II.7) which are to be sung to the student, are all in praise of the god Indra (the god of rain). The dark colour of the student's clothes and food thus is connected with water or rain even in the Sūtra-tradition.

In the tradition of the Sūtra-s and the Smṛti-s, the red colour finds place in the magical rites. The KātŚS (XXII. 3.15) says that the priests engaged in the performance of magical rites have to wear red garments as also red turbans.[18] The YājSm. (II. 152) states that in the case of dispute regarding the boundaries (*sīmāvivāda*), persons residing in the nearby areas or the same village, four or eight or ten in number, should wear red garlands and red clothes (*raktasragvasanāḥ*) and placing earth on their heads, should decide the boundaries. The NārSm

(XI.10.9) also states the same. The ManuSm (VIII. 256) says that persons wearing garlands and red clothes, carrying (lumps of) earth on their heads should swear by their accumulated merit. The reference to oath by one's merit, made by ManuSm is important, for it falls in line with the *abhicāra-karman*. Swearing by one's merit speaks of one's death or any other great calamity in the case of failure of one to prove one's point and thus could be taken as an aspect of *abhicāra-karman* (witchcraft). Reference to red colour in the context of dispute between the boundaries is hence significant.

The *purāṇa-s* mention various colours such as white, red, blue, yellow and black, while laying down the preparation of a *maṇḍala* or *yantra*.[19] The association of different colours with different deities, following the main trend of the Vedic ritual tradition, though this association at times is not identical with the Vedic ritual tradition, occurs in the Mbh while prescribing the gift of cows of different colours (Mbh. *Anuśāsana*. 79.8-20).

The Mbh echoes the Vedic ritualistic colour-sense, when it says that a red beast (goat) is to be sacrificed for Agni, a multi-coloured one for All Gods (Viśve Devāḥ) and a *nīla* bull (here *nīla* signifies black, for the 'blue' colour will not fit in the case of a bull).[20] The Mbh does not mention the deity to which the *nīla* (black) bull is sacrificed. But it could be Śiva as Mahādeva, from the association of the *nīla* (blue or black) colour with him. It has to be noted that Śiva's proto-type Rudra is associated with the *nīla* colour as far back as the Saṃhitā period. Rudra is called *nīlaśikhaṇḍa* 'blue-tufted' in AV (II.27.6ab). The VājSam mentions the deity *nīlagrīva* (god having *nīla* neck) and the commentators take it to

mean Rudra.[21] That the word *nīla* may mean blue and not necessarily always black, is pointed out in the Mbh, when Umā asks Śaṅkara bout the cause, why the latter's throat has turned *nīla* (here 'blue') like the feather of a peacock.[22] Śaṅkara says that it is blue like a peacock (i.e. a peacock's feather) because of his gulping the poison churned out from the milky ocean.[23]

From the beliefs about colours, strewn in the Vedic ritual tradition, and preserved later in the Sūtra-s, Smṛti-s, Mbh and the *purāṇa-s*, we can say that in the case of some colours such as white, black, yellow, tawny and red, the principle of sympathetic (also called homeopathic) magic works to a great extent and this is in tune with several such ideas found all the world over, pointing out thereby that the human mind irrespective of space and time, in many respects works alike.

## REFERENCES


1. RV. VII.33.3b.
2. ibid. I.35.9a, 10a.
3. ibid. II.35.10ab, 11d.
4. ibid. IV.51.9c.
5. Sāyaṇa in his comm. on the *TaittSam.* II.1.1 and especially on the statement of injunction, viz. *vāyavyaṃ śvetam ālabheta bhūtikāmaḥ*, says that in the absence of a specific mention of a particular beast, the 'goat' alone is to be understood as the beast meant due to the earlier mention of goat (in the statement of *vidhi*) not being refuted.
6. see Eggeling, J., *The Śatapatha Brāhmana*, pt. II, SBE, vol. 26, Delhi, 1988 (1885), p. 114, n. 3.
7. Here in the case of the white beast, the black colour of its neck signifies smoke and thereby the beast gets related to Agni, who is exclusively given the epithet *dhūmaketu* 'having smoke as his

banner' in the RV.; vide Macdonell, A.A., *Vedic Mythology*, Hindi tr., Chowkhamba Vidyabhavana, Varanasi, 1961, p. 171.

8. James Hastings, (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol.1, p. 485a.
9. ibid. p. 485b.
10. See Upadhyaya, S.A., 'Kārīriṣṭi - A Sacrifice to be performed for securing Rain ', *H.D. Velankar Commemoration Volume*, pub.by Prof. H.D. Velankar Comm. Vol. Committee, Bombay, 1965, pp. 161-175.
11 For black colour, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. I, p. 485b.
12. Dange, S.A., *Divine Hymns and Ancient Thought*, vol. II, (Ritual and the Quest for Truth), Navrang Pubn., New Delhi, 1995, p. 207.
13. Keith, A.B., *The Veda of the Black Yajus School entitled Taittiriya Samhita*, pt. 1, HOS, vol. 18, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2nd issue, 1967 (1914), p. 136, translating the word *babhru* as 'brown', *TaittSam.* II.1.3.3,4; Eggeling, J. op.cit. p. 62, takes the word *babhru* as 'brown', ŚatBr. III.3.1.14; Macdonell, A.A., *A Vedic Reader for Students*, Oxford Uni. Press, Madras, 14th Impression, 1988 (1917), p. 60, *babhru* as 'ruddy brown', RV. II.33.5d. However the word *babhru* here is taken to mean 'tawny', as it is to match the colour of Soma. Vide *Sir Monier Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, *babhru* meaning 'deep brown, reddish brown, tawny, etc.'.
14. Dange (Mrs), S.S., "The Garment of the Bride", *Hindu Domestic Rituals–A Critical Glance*, Delhi, 1985, pp.10-14.
15. Dange (Mrs), S.S., 'Symbolism of Gold', op.cit. pp. 25-29.
16. Dange, S.A., *Encyclopaedia of Puranic Beliefs and Practices*, vol. III, Navrang, New Delhi, 1987, p. 912.
17. Kane, P.V., *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt. i, Poona, 1974, p. 372.
18. KātŚS. XXII. 3.15; also see Ram Gopal, *India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, Delhi, 1959, p. 159.
19. Dange, S.A., op.cit., vol. I, 1996, p. 254f.
20. Mbh. *Āśvamedhika-parvan*, 10.30c: *nīlaṃ cokṣāṇām medhyam apy ālabhantām.*

21. VājSam. XVI.7 *nīlagrīvaḥ*. Uvaṭa gives here an alternate interpretation of the word *nīlagrīva* as Rudra. Also ibid. XVI.8: *nīlagrīvāya*. Mahīdhara takes it to mean *rudrāya* (= *nīlakaṇṭhāya*, i.e. to one having blue neck or throat).
22. Mbh. *Anuśāsana-parvan*, 140.47: *kena kaṇṭhaś ca te nīlo barhibarhanibhaḥ kṛtaḥ*.
23. *ibid. Anuśāsana- parvan*, southern recension, 141. after v.8: *tatkṛtā nīlatā cāsīt kaṇṭhe barhinibhā śubhe*.

*HUKAM CHAND PATYAL*

# SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WATERS AND WATER SYMBOLISM

1.0 An attempt is made in this paper to show the significance of the waters and water symbolism in the *Vedas*. In the *Vedas āpaḥ* 'waters' are said to be terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial.

1.1 Water, the universal cleanser, is the most widely employed means of ritual purification. It is a particularly potent source of purification, when obtained from holy rivers, wells, springs, etc. General requirement before worship is the custom of ritual bathing, either of the whole body or parts of the body most exposed to pollution, especially the feet. In most religions of the World the deity must not be touched unless the devotee is ritually clean. The devotee is expected to bathe early in the morning, recite special *mantras*, and consecrate his day to the service of the deity. Water has purificatory qualities; it absorbs pollution and carries it away. The flow of running waters determines its purificatory efficacy. The water which supports life is a sacred source of renewal. It is the 'mother of being' as against the accumulation of filth, pollution, defilement and decay associated with death.

1.2 Waters figure mainly in magico-religious cults. They dominate the cosmogony of almost all religions of the world. In ṚV waters are something of life 'perfectly incomprehensible continuous fluid' which fills the space in the ether, and which circulates with definite unchangeable velocity.

2.0 In the *Vedas* the waters are called by the terms *ā́paḥ*, *ámbhaḥ*, etc., and the cosmic current is called by *síndhu*, *sárasvatī*, etc. The vast water collection in the ether is called *samudrá*, *arṇavá*, etc. (see Sharma 1948:1). Generally the term *ā́paḥ*, 'celestial waters' and *udakám* 'terrestrial waters', but *udakám* (ṚV. 1.164.7) and *udán* (ṚV. 5.45.10) refer to 'celestial waters'. The word *vār* 'water' (ŚatBr. 6.1.1.9 < *vṛ-* 'to cover').

2.1 The waters are said to be the first creation of the Supreme Self. In many cosmogonic accounts or myths waters have been responsible for the creation of the universe, and are also treated as the Supreme Deity. In Vedic cosmogony waters play a very significant role.

2.11 The cosmic waters are generally called *ā́po devī́ḥ prathamajā́ḥ* or *prathamā́ḥ ā́paḥ* (ṚV. 10.109.1; 10.111.8). In ṚV. 10.125.7 it is said 'My origin is in the waters, in the ocean' (*máma yónir apsvàntaḥ samudré*). In ṚV. 10.121.1 it is said 'Neither Non-Being nor Being existed then'.

Neither air nor the firmament above existed; what was moving with such force? Where? Under whose care? Was it the deep and fathomless water? In AVŚ. 12.1.8 it is mentioned 'The earth was originally a wave in the heart of the ocean; the sages went looking for it with their magic'. In a cosmogonic myth (ŚatBr.

6.1.1.12) the life-sap (*rasa*) is identified with a tortoise. Prajāpati desired: 'May I create this (earth) from the waters. He compressed this (earth which was in the embryonic form, or in the form of the egg-shell) and threw it into the waters. The juice (i.e. life-sap) which flowed from it became a tortoise; and that which was spurted upwards (became) what is produced above here over the waters. This whole (earth) dissolved itself all over the waters; all this (universe) appeared as one form only, viz. 'waters' (see Patyal 1995: 98f.). In Tai.Ā. 1.23.3 in a dialogue between the primordial Puruṣa and Prajāpati - the creator, it is said that *puruṣa* appeared in the waters in form of a tortoise out of the bones and flesh of Prajāpati (for various theories of creation, see Kuiper 1970:98ff.). In ŚatBr. 11.1.6.1. it is said: "In the beginning, the waters, and the ocean alone existed. The waters had a wish: 'How shall we procreate?' They made an effort. They practised penance (*tapas*), and so it had happened that a golden egg appeared". This egg contained Prajāpati. Thus not only is water filled with the desire for procreation, it is also capable of truly creative effort and penance. In ŚatBr. 11.1.6.16-19, Parameṣṭhin, son and hypostasis of Prajāpati, desired to become all things on earth. So he became water. Likewise Prajāpati will become breath, and Indra, the world. These notions are not contradictory; they rather represent different stages in creation. The primordial waters are formless and not especially substantive, since Prajāpati still remains an embryo with them. Later on the God created more defined and concrete waters (cf. Eliade 1987 (ed.): 15.353). In some versions of cosmogonic myth, Viṣṇu, in his third reincarnation (as a giant boar), goes down to the depths of the primeval waters, and draws the earth up from the abyss (TaiBr. 1.1.3.5;

ŚatBr. 14.1.2.11, etc., see Eliade 1958:191). In AVŚ. 12.1.8 it is said: 'She (earth) who in the beginning was sea (*salila*) upon the ocean (*arṇava*), whom the skilful moved after with their devices'. In ŚatBr. 11.1.6.24 it is said: 'The waters are the order of the world'.

2.12 In fact, water symbolizes the whole of potentiality, the source of all possible existence. Waters are the foundations of the whole world (ŚatBr. 6.8.2.2; 12.5.2.14); they are the very essence of plant life (ŚatBr. 3.6.1.7, etc.), the elixir of immortality (ŚatBr. 4.4.3.15, etc.) like the nectar (ŚatBr. 1.9.3.7; 11.5.4.5). They ensure long life and creative energy, they are the principle of all healing, and so on (ṚV. 1.23.19ff.; 10.19.1ff., etc.) 'May the waters bring us well-bring!', the Vedic priests used to pray (AVŚ. 2.3.6). 'The waters are indeed healers; they drive away and cure all illnesses' (AVŚ. 6.91.3). Water is symbol of creation, harbour of all seeds; it becomes the supreme magic and medicinal substance; it heals, it restores youth, it ensures eternal life. 'Living water' is the prototype of all water which came to be seen as existing somewhere in the sky - just as there is a heavenly Soma, a white Haoma in the heavens, and so on (cf. Eliade 1958:193). The 'ageless river' (*vijarā-nadī*)runs beside the miraculous tree (KauṣīU. 1.3). Life, strength and eternity are contained in water.

2.13 The waters are invoked with other deities. They appear as moon, young wives and goddesses who bestow boon and come to the sacrifice. They are goddesses who follow the path of the gods (ṚV. 7.47.3). Agni's origin in the original waters is often referred to. Agni is also said to be the embryo (*garbha*) of the waters (ṚV. 3.1.12-13); he is kindled in the waters (ṚV. 10.45.1; AVŚ. 13.1.50);

he is a bull who has grown up in the lap of waters (ṚV. 10.8.1); he is an ocean girt (ṚV. 8.91.5) (see Macdonell 1971: 92, sec. 35). As mothers these waters mix their milk with honey (ṚV. 1.23.16; cf. 10.30.7-9). Soma delights in these waters as a young man in lively maidens; he approaches them as a lover, they are maidens who bow before the youth (Macdonell 1971:86, sec. 32).

2.14 The deity ApāṃNapāt 'the Son of Waters' is invoked in ṚV. 2.35, and also in ṚV. 10.30.3-4 addressed to waters. ApāṃNapāt is also called the embryo (*garbha*) of the waters (ṚV. 7.9.3; 1.70.3, etc.). In Avesta ApāṃNapāt is a spirit of the waters, who lives in their depths, and is surrounded by females and is often invoked with them, and he is said to have seized the brightness in the depth of the ocean (see Macdonell 1971: 69-70, sec. 24). 'The moon is in the waters' (ṚV. 1.105.1), and 'rain comes from moon' (AitBr. 8.28 = 40.5), these two are main motives in Indian thought. Originally ApāṃNapāt was in primitive times the name of a spirit of vegetation, but was later also applied to the moon and to the nectar of the moon, Soma. Ardvisura Anahita, the Iranian goddess of water, was a lunar being; Sin, the Babylonian moon-god also governed the waters (see Elide 1958:159).

2.15 In the rituals mostly the flowing waters are preferred, as against the standing or stagnant waters which are unfit for use. In the *Rājasūya* 'the Royal Consecration' seventeen different kinds of waters are employed to confer each some special power and the king and the consecration (TaiS. 1.8.11.1; KātyŚS. 15.4.22ff.); likewise in the horse sacrifice also different kinds of waters find their use and efficacy. In the context of the *Vratopanayana* the sacrificer does sipping of the water

in order to be pure for commencing sacrifice (ŚatBr. 1.1.1.1). The purifying and protecting power of the waters is seen in some domestic ritual, e.g. a water is placed near a woman in child-bed (HirGS. 2.4.5).

2.16 The *Avabhṛtha* 'Concluding Bath' at the end of the *Soma* sacrifice and also at the end of many other rites is of great significance. The practice seems to have existed in the Ṛgvedic times itself (see e.g. ṚV. 8.93.23). In the ablutions the waters become charged with magic potency and power. Thus at the end of the bath at the horse sacrifice, those who go in, though evil doers, are released from all their sins (KātyŚS. 20.8.17-18). This too serves as the mode of driving out evil in a curious rite, which is recorded in the horse sacrifice (ŚatBr. 13.3.6.5; TaiBr.3.9.15; see Keith 1925 (=1970):303-4).

2.17 The rivers occupy a very important position. ṚV. 10.75 eulogizes the Sindhu, and ṚV. 3.33 is devoted to the invocation of Vipās and Śutudrī. Sarasvatī, Sarayū and Sindhu are invoked as great rivers (ṚV. 10.64.9); Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Śutudrī, Puruṣṇī are addressed (ṚV.10.76.5); (see Macdonell 1971:86 ff., sec. 33; Keith 1925 (=1970): 172ff.). Sarasvatī, the river goddess occupies an important position, as she being one of the waters or representative of the waters (see Gonda 1985: 54ff., chapter 5 'Sarasvatī and the Waters'). The river goddess Sarasvatī's transformation into Sarasvatī Vāc appears to be a more complicated affair. Rivers and seas contribute to defining the contours of a country, so the dividing of the water helps to define cosmic order.

2.18 Normally waters assume feminine character, for example the Apsarasas of India and the Greek Naiads

and Nereidas are young women, caught up in young erotic adventures. But waters can occasionally be masculine: 'They rest on sperm, as Varuṇa rests on waters' (BṛĀraU. 3.9.22). In Egypt the Nile is imagined as half man and half woman. Its waters are male, and its arable land is female. Together they are father and mother. In Greece the rivers are strongly masculine, and like the gods of the storm and of rain, have the attributes of a bull (cf. Eliade (ed.) 1987:15.356).

## 3.0 *Reśumé*

From the foregoing discussion we are led to the following considerations *argumenti causa*:

1. By and large the term *āpaḥ* is 'celestial waters', as against the term *udaka* 'terrestrial waters'.

2. The waters represent the properties of the ether.

3. In almost all religions of the world waters are purificatory means; they possess special remedial power.

4. Primeval waters are closely associated with the cosmogonic myth.

5. Waters symbolize the whole of potentiality, the source of all possible existence.

6. The rivers are very important water symbolisms in Vedism.

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*M. SRIMANNARAYANA MURTI*

# GRAMMARIAN AND POETICIAN ON LINGUISTIC VARIABILITY

'Linguistic variability' (*aticāratā*) is the characteristic quality of deviating from strict type in form and meaning of the linguistic units of expression, because of which 'ambiguity' (*saṃdigdhatā*) becomes inevitable and inherent in language. For the linguist - either modern or traditional - ambiguity is a formidable barrier in describing the language in precise terms. On the other hand the same ambiguity is the fertile field for the poetician to develop theories of literary criticism. The poetician and the grammarian diverge and converge variously in defence of their case.

## I

The grammarian attempts at reducing ambiguity in the language by defining the form and the functions of words with a view to establishing norms for standardization for communication among the elite (*śiṣṭavyavahāra*) by narrowing down the variability.[1] But in fact the

ambiguity in language cannot be overcome by the grammarian; for, the language is psychological and sociological besides physiological and physical.

The ambiguity in the language arises mainly because of two reasons, namely transmutation and idiomization. By transmutation a word or a phrase denotes a sense over and above the lexical meanings without any morphological change. In other words the understood meaning of an expression is not expressed by the combination of the exact meanings of the individual words. For example the non-epithetized phrases get crystallized by becoming epithets.[2] In the growth of the language a determinative compound (i.e. a *tatpuruṣa* or a *karmadhāraya*) changes into an epithetised compound (*bahuvrīhi*);[3] thus the meaning of a compound becomes variable depending upon the qualificant or the context. For example Patañjali says that the compound *tapara* in Pāṇini's rule: *taparas tatkālasya* can be taken as a *tatpuruṣa* (*tāt paraḥ*) and also as a *bahuvrīhi* (*taḥ paro yasya*). Applying this interpretation he resolves *ādaic* in *vṛddhir ādaic* (Pāṇ. 1.1.1) as *ā* + *daic* and *ād* + *aic* by which the specification of duration of time changes form ā to ai.[4] He also suggests that the sūtras can be interpreted variously depending upon necessity. Similarly Bhartṛhari deduces eight definitions for sentence by taking the compound *padaprakṛti* in the *Ṛkprātiśākhya* rule: *saṃhitā padaprakṛtiḥ* (2.1).[5]

'Idiomisation' is a process in which certain forms of words, phrases or sentences catch the imagination of speakers and get used in a distinct sense against the norms of morphology and syntax. In other words the idiomatic expressions flout at the rules in the social communication and the speech community feels gratified by

finding pleasure in such innovative forms. This process continues so long as the intention of the speaker is understood in full spirit. Thus the idiomatic expressions are ungrammatical and at the same time validated by all the members of the speech community.

The difference between transmutation and idiomisation is that the former is a semantic irregularity in which the change is gradual and becomes regular, whereas the latter is a morphological irregularity in which the change is spontaneous and remains irregular. Each idiomatic case has to be described separately by the grammarian.[6]

The grammarian has no alternative than to accept all the linguistic changes and account for in his grammar. But at the same time he finds in himself a custodian and attempts at arresting linguistic variability by imposing several rules on the speech community refraining from exploitation of ambiguity. The rules read with *vā, vibhāṣā, anyatarasyām* and *bahulam* attest Pāṇini's concern over linguistic variability. Even Pāṇini's rules, which are supposed to be crystal clear (*asaṃdigdha*), have become ambiguous in the succeeding generations because of the linguistic variability on the one hand and intermittent interruptions to the grammatical tradition.[7] Some of Pāṇini's rules perplex the readers to grasp their correct functions.[8] As early as by the time of Kātyāyana and Patañjali, several doubts (*saṃdeha*) were raised against the purport of several rules. For example Kātyāyana records that the rule *anudāttaṃ padam ekavarjam* (6.1.158) is ambiguous because the word *ekavarjam* is an unacceptable usage.[9] Kātyāyana became too critical in some places and came forward with several riders (*vārttikas*) to resolve ambiguity in the rules, sometimes even interpreting them from non-pāṇinian nuances.[10]

But in order to reduce chances of variability in the interpretation of Pāṇini, Patañjali opines that the rules of Pāṇini should be taken as an integrated and correlated set, for being read after great contemplation for public cause without any personal expectations.[11] So the meanings of the rules are to be understood against the philosophical speculations of Pāṇini himself. Further he imposes great restraint on the interpreters not to distort the text by inconclusive arguments contrary to the spirit of Pāṇini, as it would end up only in ambiguity of the rules jeopardizing the very function of grammar. His fervency in reducing ambiguity is evident in his repudiation of many a vārttika of Kātyāyana. For example he sets at naught the vārttikas against the inclusion of the phoneme *ḷ* in the *pratyāhāra* rule *ṛḷk* on the ground of inconclusiveness in Kātyāyana's arguments, for maintaining an entirely different stance from Pāṇini.[12]

Patañjali evolved several principles of interpretation of Pāṇini's rules, which ultimately resulted in the development of interpretation as a separate branch in grammar besides its main objective to showing the correct words[13] separating from the corrupt ones. The *jñāpakas* and *paribhāṣas* (meta-rules) formulated by Patañjali stand testimony to his avowed effort in solving ambiguity. As a part of his interpretative technique he allows even splitting the rules (*yoga-vibhāga*) taking advantage of the linguistic variability.[14]

Even with regard to the idiomatic expressions, the grammarians including Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali consider *gamakatva* 'communicability (of the speaker's intention (*tātparya*) to the listener)' in the speech community of the elite as the touchstone of validity and acceptability of the irregular forms.[15] To arrest further

distortions in the name of idiom, restrictions ranging from tabu to prohibition are imposed disallowing further analogical formations. For example grammatical validity is restricted to only such incompatible compounds (*asamartha-samāsa*) like *asūryaṃpaśya* 'not seeing sun' and irregular sentences like *āsanam adhitiṣṭhati*, which are found coinage during their times.[16] The grammarian became supreme in arresting the ungrammatical growth of language by linking it with religion and philosophy taking advantage of the intimate association of language with ritual and holistic traditionalism. The religious significance attached to the language is known from the very nomenclature *saṃskṛta* and its derivation by Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali.[17] It is further corroborated by Bhartṛhari by treating grammar as a *śāstra*, a *smṛti* and an *āgama*.[18]

The linguistic variability is concerned more with the life of language. The language has to change, modify and grow in forms and meanings to suit to the changing society. No grammarian can halt its growth by rules of grammar. No one can predict how a word or a phrase could be tomorrow, save describing what it is today. Even Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali in recognition of the linguistic variability introduced several semantic concepts like *svārtha*, *anyapadārtha*, *guṇa-vacana*, *sāmānya*, *viśeṣa*, *viśeṣaṇa*, *vṛtti*, *ajahatsvārthā vṛtti*, *jahatsvārthā vṛtti* and *kāraka*, and the technical names like *upamāna*, *upamiti*, *karmapravacanīya*, *karmadhāraya*, *tatpuruṣa*, *bahuvrīhi*, *dvigu*, *ātmanepada* and *parasmaipada*. Bhartṛhari, while explaining sentence sense and semantic functions of words in *vṛtti*, gave an exposition of the *abhihitānvaya* and *anvitābhidhāna* theories of meaning, which later were explained in

full by the Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas respectively.

But because of the religio-philosophical overtones grammar could not be freed from the Vedic language and from the concept of purity of language. For example Bhartṛhari holds that the Prakrit dialects do not have direct denotativeness except through the recollection of the Sanskrit cognates.[19] Thus in view of growing opposition to the Vedic doctrine on the one hand and of popularity of Prakrit as a medium of creative poetry on the other, the Sanskrit grammar suffered several setbacks causing interruptions time and again to the grammatical tradition.

II

Now Sanskrit literary criticism has taken hold of the description of the language to take it to the common man. The literary criticism is distinguished into two types called *nāṭaka-lakṣaṇa* 'dramaturgy' dealing exclusively with dramas and *kāvya-lakṣaṇa* 'rhetorics' dealing exclusively with creative compositions.[20] Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* is the earliest known work on *Nāṭaka-lakṣaṇa*. We do not have any extant work on *Kāvya-lakṣaṇa* earlier to Bhāmaha's *Kāvyālaṅkāra*. In subsequent times some of the literary critics have combined these two under one common nomenclature *sāhitya* 'poetics'. Even though Sāhitya is traced its origin to the *Veda*,[21] the poeticians have given greater emphasis on the linguistic variability and promoted Prakrits and regional vernaculars on a par with Sanskrit.[22]

That the poetician continues the mission of the grammarian is confirmed by the technical names in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* of Bharata which are analogous to those of

Pāṇini and by the confession of Ānandavardhana that the grammarians are the 'former holders of scholarship' (*prathame vidvāṃsaḥ*).[23] Even though Bharata opens his *Nāṭya-śāstra* with tracing the origin of dramaturgy to the *Vedas*, Brahmā, Śiva,[24] he begins from where the grammarian concludes.[25] His theory of *guṇa* in contrast to *lakṣaṇa*, *alaṃkāra* and *doṣa* can be traced back to Pāṇini's theory of *guṇa* and *vṛddhi*.[26] Ānandavardhana uses the philosophical term *vivarta* in the same sense as used by Bhartṛhari[27] and takes many a semantic interpretation of the grammarians as conclusive and final.[28] Ānandavardhana's commentator Abhinavagupta confesses that the *dhvani* theory of the poetician is modelled on the *sphoṭa* theory of the grammarian.[29]

The two poetic concepts *abhidhā* and *lakṣaṇā* based on linguistic variability are known earliest from the *Mahābhāṣya*, wherein Patañjali uses *vṛtti* in the sense of poetician's *lakṣaṇā-vṛtti* and classifies it into *jahat-svārthā vṛtti*, *ajahat-svārthā vṛtti* and *jahadajahat-svārthā vṛtti* and expounds two syntactic relations (*abhisaṃbandha*) called *tasyedam* 'this is of that' and *so 'yam* 'this is that'.[30] Similarly the figures of speech like *śleṣa*,[31] *vyājastuti*, *vyājanindā*, *paryāyokti* and *samāsokti*, the poetic theories like Dvani, Rasa, Alaṃkāra, Vakrokti, Aucitya and so on are based on the linguistic variability inherent in the language. The manifestation of *dhavni*, *rasa*, etc., depend upon ambiguity because of which the language presents itself differently to different people causing varying aesthetic pleasure.[32]

Bharata not only recognizes the communicability and acceptability to Prakrit but also stresses need for representation in dramas of dialects, vernaculars of other regions,[33] variations rooted in caste and profession of the

speech community, of regional mannerisms, manners, traditions, beliefs, superstitions, music and dance.[34] He opines that they are to be blended with Sanskrit, but for which the literature cannot be a representation of the contemporary society.[35] The same view of Bharata is advocated by Vātsyāyana in his *Kāma-śāstra*.[36]

## III

The introduction of Prakrits and over emphasis on aesthetic experience on the basis of ambiguity relieved monotony in Sanskrit compositions. But no sooner the Prakrits and Middle-Indo-Aryan dialects took over the reigns of literature by displacing Sanskrit, the poeticians felt a need to refine it again by reimposing sanctions on poets, playwrites and connoisseurs as regards the language and norms of usage. New lists of poetic blemishes in poetic expressions and norms of appropriateness for Sanskrit words came to be included in the books on poetics beginning from Bhāmaha. Bhoja wielded his shield as a grammarian and sword as a poetician. In his *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa* and *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* he has retold the whole grammar of Sanskrit language from the point of view of a poetician and a poet.

Śrīharṣa recommends for the resurgence of Sanskrit in a poetic fancy.[37] The gods descended from Heaven to witness the *syavaṃvara* 'self choosing (of husband)' of Damayantī. The spectators thought that they could differentiate the gods from human beings by the perfected language (*saṃskṛtrimā vāk* = Sanskrit) they speak. But on observation they found that even the human beings have resorted to use the same perfected language of the gods, lest they would not be understood if spoken in

their regional vernaculars. The satiric tone of Śrīharṣa foreshadows the fate of Sanskrit in coming centuries.

Increasing craze for and overwhelming public response to vernaculars on account of full play of linguistic variability on the one hand and the diminishing employment of Sanskrit for creative writings, Sanskrit poetics also suffered the same fate of the Sanskrit grammar. It has grown for its survival into a branch of learning called Alaṃkāra-śāstra as much as the Vyākaraṇa-śāstra, or as a matter of fact any school of philosophy, linking up with liberation as the final purpose.[38] As a result Sanskrit poetics acquired a new lease of life when Grammarians and Naiyāyikas started quoting the views of the poeticians.[39] Conversely the poeticians also began using the terminology and logic of the Naiyāyikas.[40]

In conclusion 'linguistic variability' is the life breath of language and it is the criterion to decide whether a given language is dead or alive. This phenomenon is aptly described by the grammarian Helārāja and the poetician Ānandavardhana by two significant descriptive terms *śabdaśakti-vaicitrya*[41] and *bhaṇiti-vaicitrya*[42] respectively. The linguistic variability is higher in live languages than in dead languages. Further neither the grammarian can out right arrest linguistic variability and dismiss ambiguity, nor the poetician can afford to allow ambiguity to grow leaps and bounds. Thus both of them work at one goal, namely determining the intention of the speaker (*vaktur icchā*) from the language; but they work out their theories with different points of view.

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1. Patañjali himself declares that the usage of the *śiṣṭas* is the touchstone for the correctness of the forms, meanings and also code of conduct; cf. *yadi tarhi śiṣṭā śabdeṣu pramāṇaṃ kim aṣṭādhyāyyā kriyate ? śiṣṭajñānārthāṣṭādhyāyī*, MB.6.3.109; *yo hi śiṣṭavyavahāro 'brāhmaṇībhyaḥ samprayacchati' ity eva tatra bhavitvyam*, ibid. 1.3.55.
2. See my monograph: *An Introduction to Sanskrit Linguistics*, p. 226, D.K. Publications, Delhi, 1984.
3. See my monograph: *Sanskrit Compounds - A Philosophical Study*, p. 273, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies 93, 1974.
4. *nanu taḥ paro yasmāt so 'yaṃ taparaḥ. nety āha. tād api paras taparaḥ*, MB. 1.1.1, p. 42 (Kielhorn's BORI edn.).
5. *Vākyapadīya* [= VP], 2.1-2.
6. In fact each case describes the culture of the speech community at a given time; e.g. *devānāṃpriya, khaṭvārūḍha, tīrthakāka*; see *Sanskrit Compounds - A Philosophical Study*, pp. 80-81.
7. The two versions of the *ekasaṃjñādhikāra* and the interpretation of the rule *svaṃ rūpaṃ śabdasyāśabdasaṃjñā* (1.1.68) are the best examples; see my articles: 'Ekasaṃjñādhikāra in the Aṣṭadhyāyī', *S.V.U. Oriental Journal*, vol.10, 1970; 'Two Versions of the Ekasaṃjñādhikāra', *S.V.U. Oriental Journal*, vol. 12, 1971; 'Bhartṛhari on svaṃ rūpaṃ śabdasyāśabdasaṃjñā', *Adyar Library Bulletin*, Madras, vol. 44-45, 1980-81.
8. For example Pāṇini's rule 8.4.64: *halo yamāṃ yami lopaḥ* is a good example of ambiguity. The word *āditya* (m) is derived, for instance, from the word *aditi* (f) by adding the secondary derivative suffix *-yat* (<*ṇyat*) by the rule 4.1.85: *dity-adity-āditya-patyuttarapadāṇ ṇyaḥ* in the sense 'the son of Aditi' and by dropping i (< *aditi+yat*) by the rule 6.4.148: *yasyeti ca*. Then the y (in *adit+yat*) gets doubled by the vārttika: *yaṇo mayo dve bhavata iti vaktavyam* read under the rule 8.4.47: *anaci ca* (>*ādit+y+ya*). By applying the rule 8.4.64 the middle y (i.e. the doubled 'y') is dropped giving the form *āditya*. If it is not dropped by not applying 8.4.64, the form is *ādityya*. Similarly if *āditya/ādityya* gets another secondary suffix *ya (ṇyat)* by the rule 4.4.24: *sāsya devatā* in the sense of a sixth case in combination with 4.1.85, and the final vowel a is dropped by 6.4.148 the form will be *ādity-ya/ādityy-ya*. It can have the *v*

of the suffix doubled by the rule 8.4.47. By applying the rule 8.4.64, the doubled *y* is dropped optionally and again we get *āditya/ādityya*.

Here the ambiguity results as follows: There is an uncertainty whether the word *anyatarasyām* recurs (*anuvṛtta*) in the rule 8.8.64 from the rule 8.4.62: *jhayo ho 'nyatarasyām*. The rule 8.4.64 read together with 8.4.65: *jharo jhari savarṇe* means that a consonant excluding *h* (the *pratyāharas yam* and *jhar* combined is equal to *yar*) is dropped when a homorganic consonant occurs within a word. The homorgamic consonant arises by the doubling of a consonant by the rules 8.4.46: *aco rahābhyāṃ dve* and 8.4.47: *anaci ca*. Every doubled consonant by the rules 8.4.46 and 47 shall be dropped by 8.4.64 and 65. Therefore the rules 8.4.46 and 47 become purposeless. Again if 8.4.64 and 65 are made optional there arises endless regress of doubling of consonants. But in pronunciation more than three consonants can neither be uttered by the speaker nor comprehended by the listener. Therefore the commentators avail freedom in their interpretations. For example the author of the *Kāśikā* - a commentary on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* - makes the dropping optional. Rāmacandra, the author of the *Prakriyākaumudī* - a recast of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* - takes the rules 8.4.64 and 65 as obligatory. In compromise Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, the author of the *Siddhāntakaumudī* - another recast of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* - treads a midway and holds that the rule has restricted optionality by which the doubling is obligatory upto three consonants and thereafter optional. By this the rule 8.4.64 does not operate in case of first doubling and operates over and above the conjunction of three consonants.

9. It is unacceptable because the listener is unable to understand the intention of the speaker on account of its being not used in the speech of the elite of the day (*ekavarjam iti cāprasiddhiḥ, saṃdehāt*, 6.1.154, vt. 3, vol. 3, p. 99). Similarly we find a vārttika: *ācāryopajane 'nekasyāpi pūrvapadatvāt saṃdehaḥ*, vt. 1 under the rule: *ācāryopasarjanaś cāntevāsī*, 6.2.36, vol. 3, p. 125. The answer is suggested by Kātyāyana himself by drawing an example in the common parlance practice (*lokavyavahāra*). Cf. the usage of the compound word: *saṃdehanivṛttyartha*, MB. 2.2.24.

10. Cf. *anyathā kṛtvā prayojanam uktam. anyathā kṛtvā parihāraḥ. ... samāne cārthe śāstrānvito 'śāstrānvitasya nivartako bhavati*, MB. 1.1.1, p. 20.
11. *pramāṇabhūta ācāryo darbhapavitrapāṇiḥ śucāv avakāśe prāṅmukha upaviśya mahatā yatnena sūtraṃ praṇayati sma. tatrāśakyaṃ varṇenāpy anarthakena bhavitum. kiṃ punar iyatā sūtreṇa*, MB. 1.1.1, p. 39. Therefore even though the succeeding grammarians could suggest various alternatives to the rules of Pāṇini but none dared to change them. For example for the rule *akaḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ*, 6.1.101 Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita suggests a change as *'ako 'ki dīrghaḥ'*, *Siddhāntakaumudī*, 85. Similarly he remarks *idaṃ sūtraṃ tyaktuṃ śakyam* against the rule *dviguś ca*, 2.1.23, ibid. 685.
12. Patañjali says that Pāṇini included *ḷ* in *ṛḷk* on the presumption that there are four types of words, namely *jāti-śabda, guṇaśabda, kriyā-śabda* and *yadṛcchā-śabda*. Kātyāyana maintains *ḷ* is superfluous on the ground that there is no fourth category called *yadṛcchā-śabda*; cf. MB.1.1.1, *Pratyāhāra-sūtra* 2, pp.19-21.
13. So he holds that no rule of Pāṇini should be discarded on the grounds of ambiguity, instead the commentary should be referred to for clarifications; for, ambiguity cannot make a rule invalid; cf. *saṃdehamātram etad bhavati. sarvasaṃdeheṣu cedam upatiṣṭhate - vyākhyānato viśeṣapratipattir na hi saṃdehād alakṣaṇam*, MB.1.1.1.
14. cf. *yogavibhāgaḥ kariṣyate. anudāttaṅita ātmanepadam. tato bhāvakarmaṇoḥ. tatra kartari*, MB. 1.3.12, p. 277.
15. *etasmāddhetor brūmo 'gamakatvād iti na brūmo 'paśabdaḥ syād iti. .... gamakatvād iha vṛttir bhaviṣyati muṇḍayati māṇavakam iti*, MB. 3.1.8, pp. 18-19.
16. cf. *suḍ anapuṃsakasya* (1.1.43) *ity etan niyamārthaṃ bhaviṣyati. etasyaivāsamarthasamāsasya nañsamāsasya gamakasya sādhutvaṃ bhavati nānyasyeti*, MB. 2.1.1, p. 361.
17. See my article 'On the Nomenclature Saṃskṛta', *Adyar Library Bulletin*, 57, 1993.
18. Cf.*śāstre 'sminn upavarṇitāḥ*,VP. 1.26; *seyaṃ vyākaraṇasmṛtiḥ*, ibid. 1.158; *parvatād āgamaṃ labdhvā*, ibid. 2.486; *avicchinna āgamaḥ*, ibid. 3.8.24. The three words *śastra, smṛti* and *āgama* have distinct significations, each defining the nature and scope

of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. It is a *smṛti* 'recollection', for it is an ancillary for understanding the *Veda*. It is a *śāstra* 'science' for it deals with the *dharma* as mentioned in the *śrutis* and *smṛtis*. It is also called *āgama*, for it is written on the *āgama* 'tradition' which has come down concerning with the concept of *mokṣa* 'liberation' derived from the *Vedas*.

19. *pāraṃparyād apabraṃśā viguṇeṣv abhidhātṛṣu/*
*prasiddhim āgatā yena teṣāṃ sādhur avācakaḥ//* VP. 1.181.

20. *kāvyeṣu bhāvārthagatāni tajjñaiḥ*
*samyak prayojyāni yathārasaṃ tu /*
*Nāṭyśāstra* (NS), 16.4, p. 216, Parimal Publications, Delhi 1984.
*sa mithyādhyavasāyas tu procyate kāvyalakṣaṇe/*
ibid. 16.16, p. 223;
*sā jñeyā hy upapattis tu lakṣaṇaṃ nāṭakāśrayam/*
ibid. 16.35, p. 231.
He also remarks that some features of dramaturgy are common and applicable to *kāvya* also; cf. *nāṭakādyeṣu kāvyeṣu proktavyāni sūribhiḥ*, NS. 15.227, p.208. For dramaturgy, for example, only four *alaṅkāras* are useful (16.41, p. 234). Therefore he recommends for further elaboration on the *alaṅkāras* to the *kāvyalakṣaṇa* (cf. *śeṣā ye lakṣaṇair noktās te grāhyāḥ kāvyalokataḥ*, NS. 16.52, p. 235).

21. For example Bharata holds that Nāṭyam is a fifth *Veda* (*nāṭyākhyaṃ pañcamaṃ vedaṃ setihāsaṃ karomy aham/* NS. 1.5, p. 12.) He opines that this science is aimed at the same goal of life as the *Veda* and its ancillaries, ibid. 1.14-15.

22. *śabdārthau sahitau kāvyaṃ gadyaṃ padyaṃ ca tad dvidhā/*
*saṃskṛtaṃ prākṛtaṃ cānyad apabhraṃśam iti tridhā//*
*Bhāmahālaṅkāra*, 1.16.

23. The grammarian came to be called by special epithets like *vidvān*, *sūri* and *paṇḍita*. When spoken Sanskrit underwent so much of change that it could no longer be connected with the Vedic without the help of exegesis, the poetician took over the role of the grammarians to describe the language. Hence Ānandavardhana calls the grammarians *prathame vidvāṃsaḥ* (*Dhvanyāloka*, 1.13) which implies in contradistinction to *adyatana-vidvāṃsaḥ* who are naturally the poeticians. But the poetician differs from the grammarian in scope, technique and

terminology, which are indeed built on the model of the former (cf. Ānandavadhana's conclusive remark: *vyākaraṇamūlatvāt sarvavidyānām*, ibid. 1.13). *Sūribhiḥ* referred to in 1.13: *sa dhvanir iti sūribhiḥ kathitaḥ* is explained by Ānandavardhana himself with its synonym *vidvat* in 1.16: *sūribhiḥ kathita iti vidvadupajñeyam uktiḥ, na tu yathākathaṃcit pravṛtteti pratipādyate*. In his paraphrase of Ānandavardhana's usage *śrūyamāṇeṣu* in 1.16 Abhinavagupta refers to Bhartṛhari with the epithet of highest reverence *tatrabhavān (yathāha tatrabhavān bhartṛhariḥ*; some editions have a variant reading attracting still greater respect: *yathāha bhagavān bhartṛhariḥ)*. Śaṃkara in his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, (1.1.1 intr.) refers to the grammarian by the word *paṇḍita (tam etam evaṃlakṣaṇam adhyāsaṃ paṇḍitā avidyeti manyante, tadvivekena ca vastusvarūpāvadhāraṇāṃ vidyām āhuḥ)*. This is in corroboration with Patañjali's illustration: *ahaṃ paṇḍito bravīmi* (MB. under the rule 1.2.58).

24. In view of the historicity, Vyākaraṇa is claimed as a common science of language on all the Vedic recensions (*sarvavedapāriṣadaṃ hīdaṃ śāstram*, MB.2.1.58) and the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is held as produced by taking out whatever is applicable from all the *śāstras* (*sarvaśāstrārthasampannam*, NS. 1.15). So also Abhinavagupta says: *tatra śāstrāntaraprasiddhān api rasāṅgatvena kaviśikṣārthaṃ naṭasya ca tatra tatrābhinaye viśrāntikarān itikartavyatayopadeśārtham āgamān nirdiśati āgametyādi, Abhinava-bhāratī* on NS.14.4.
25. For example in recognition of the significance of language and grammar, Bharata says in NS. 14.2-3:
*vāṅmayānīha śāstrāṇi vāṅniṣṭhāni tathaiva ca/*
*tasmād vācaḥ paraṃ nāsti vāgghi sarvasya kāraṇam//*
26. See my article 'Concept of Guṇa according to Bharata', *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, vol. 26, pts. i-ii, 1988, pp. 177-185.
27. The theories of causation called *pariṇāma* and *vivarta* are objective and subjective respectively. As an advocate of *bauddhapadārtha*, the grammarian takes the *vivartavāda* only. Thus Bhartṛhari defines *vivarta* as: *ekasya tattvād apracyutasya bhedānukāreṇāsatyavibhaktānyarūpopagrāhitā vivartaḥ, Vṛtti* on VP. 1.1. *Vivarta* thus means the appearance of a thing as

something else without undergoing any change. Now Ānandavardhana uses the word *vivarta* in the same sense in: *teṣāṃ caikaikaprabhedāpekṣayāpi tāvaj jagadvṛttam upanibadhyamānaṃ sukavibhis tadicchāvaśād anyathā sthitam apy anyathaiva vivartate, Dhvanyāloka*, 4.3.

28. For example in approbation of the grammarians' theory of liberation, Ānandavardhana, concludes his discussion on the poeticians' theory of liberation with the words: *nirṇītaś cāyam arthaḥ śabdatattvavidbhir eva, Dhvanyāloka*, 4.5.

29. Cf. *vyaktaśabdānāṃ tathā śrūyamāṇā ye varṇā nādaśabdavācyā antyabuddhinigrāhyāḥ sphoṭābhivyañjakās te dhvaniśabdenoktāḥ ... asmābhir api prasiddhebhyaḥ śabdavyāpārebhyo 'bhidhātātparya-lakṣaṇārūpebhyo 'tirikto vyāpāro dhvanir ity uktaḥ, Locana* on *Dhvanyāloka*, 1.16. The Kāvyapuruṣa concept of Rājaśekhara (880-920 A.D.) is again comparable to the Śabdabrahman concept of the grammarian. For example compare VP.1.1 with:

*yad etad vāṅmayaṃ viśvam arthamūrtyā vivartate/*
*so 'smi kāvyapumān amba pādaṃ vandeya tāvakam//*

*Kāvyamīmāṃsā, Adhyāya* 3.

Further elaborations of the Kāvyapuruṣa are based on the principle of *pratīkopāsanā* 'symbol meditation', which had its seeds in the *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka*, 1.23, wherein Prajāpati is described in the same way.

30. See my article: 'Contextual referent and relation of identity', *Adyar Library Bulletin*, vol. 52, 1988, pp. 61-82.

31. *yaś cāyam upamāśleṣādir alaṃkāravargaḥ prasiddhaḥ sa bhaṇitivaicitryād upanibaddhyamānaḥ svayam eva anavadhir dhatte punaḥ śataśākham, Dhvanyāloka*, 4.7.

32. *avasthādeśakālādiviśeṣair api jāyate/*
*ānantyam eva vācyasya śuddhasyāpi svabhāvataḥ//* ibid. 4.7.

33. Ānandavardhana holds that novelty of poetry enhances when a word of one language gives several other meanings by being associated with other languages wherein the same word acquired new shades of meaning; cf. *bhaṇitiś ca svabhāṣābhedena vyavasthitā satī pratiniyatabhāṣāgocarārthavaicitryanibandhanaṃ punar aparaṃ kāvyārthānām ānantyam āpādayati, Dhvanyāloka*, 4.7.

34. NS. 14.7, 17.1. In this respect Bhartṛhari as a grammarian differs from the poetician Bharata. Bhartṛhari does not reconcile to admit denotativeness for the Apabhraṃśas; cf. VP.1.145-147.
35. Cf. NS. 1.14-15.
36. The sixtyfour fine arts enumerated in the *Kāmasūtra*, 1.3.16 depend on practicability in the contemporary society; cf. NS.1.2.46-49.
37. *anyonyabhāṣānavabodhabhīteḥ*
*saṃskṛtrimābhir yyavahāravatsu /*
*digbhiḥ sameteṣu nareṣu vāgbhiḥ*
*sauvargavargo na narair acihni// Naiṣadha*, 10.34.
38. The poeticians have also come forward with such tabus like *kāvyālāpāṃś ca varjayet* 'reading of literary compositions should be abandoned', by which they ventured to oust the literary compositions for mere aesthetic pleasure, without affording support to the fourfold human goals of life *puruṣārthas*. The inspiration to this has already been given by Bharata; cf.
*dharmyam artham yaśasyaṃ ca sopadeśyaṃ sasaṃgraham/*
*bhaviṣyataś ca lokasya sarvakarmānudarśakam//*
*sarvaśāstrārthasampannaṃ sarvaśilpapravartakam /*
*nāṭyākhyaṃ pañcamaṃ vedaṃ setihāsaṃ karomy aham //*
NS. 1.14-15, p. 12.
39. For example Koṇḍubhaṭṭa in his *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇa* quotes the following verse in connection with the discussion of *Samāsaśakti*:
*satyāsaktamanāḥ pravṛddhanarakacchedī dvijendrāśrayo*
*yaś cānekamukhodbhavāśrayatanuḥ śrīr yatra saṃrājate/*
*yo gaṅgāṃ ca sadā bibharti saśivo yaḥ kāmadehāśrayaḥ*
*sadyaḥ sāmyam ayam prayātu bhavatāṃ kṛṣṇena rudreṇa vā//*
*Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇa*, ed. Vidyaniwas Misra,
Bharatiya Vidya Prakasan, Delhi, 1987, p. 141.
40. For example Mammaṭa in his *Kāvyaprakāśa* refers to Vaiyākaraṇas in 1.2 (*śloka* 4) and 2.10 (*śloka* 8) in connection with the meaning and classification of words. Similarly while discussing about sentence sense (*vākyārtha*) according to poeticians, he refers to the theories called *abhihitānvaya-vāda* and *anvitābhidhāna-vāda* of the Bhāṭṭa and the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas (2.7. *śloka* 6). Vidyānātha in his *Pratāparudrīya* traces

the *anumānālaṅkāra* to Tarka (p. 301), the *yathāsaṃkhya, arthāpatti, parisaṃkhyā, uttara* and *vikalpa* to Mīmāṃsā (p. 304-307).

41. Helārāja's *Prakīrṇaprakāśa* on VP. 3.14 (*Vṛtti*).36. This linguistic principle can be generalized from several such passages of Bhartṛhari like:
*saṃkhyāsāmānyarūpeṇa tadā so 'ṃśaḥ pratīyate/*
*arthasyānekaśaktitve śabdair niyataśaktibhiḥ//*
VP. 3.14 (*Vṛtti*).104.

42. *Dhvanyāloka*, 4.7.

C. RAJENDRAN

# INFLUENCE OF BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY ON MAHIMABHAṬṬA

## I

Mahimabhaṭṭa, the author of *Vyaktiviveka* was a versatile scholar erudite in a number of disciplines like Saivism, Grammar, Mīmāṃsā and Buddhism. A perusal of *Vyaktiviveka* is enough to vouchsafe this fact, as is evident from the learned discussions contained in the text, on a variety of philosophical and technical problems like the nature of language, syntactical structures, verbal cognition, perception and inference.[1] Mahimabhaṭṭa not only betrays familiarity with philosophical stand points taken by various systems, but also makes use of technical terms and key concepts evolved in various systems. The influence of the tenets of Kashmiri Śaivism on Mahimabhaṭṭa has been brought forth by K.C. Pandey.[2] However, a study of *Vyaktiviveka* shows that the medieval logic evolved by the Vaibhāṣika philosophers Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti has also exerted much influence on Mahimabhaṭṭa's thought. This

paper aims at to trace the extent of Buddhistic influence on this most remarkable poetician belonging to the antagonist camp of the Dhvani Theory.

## II

It is Bhaṭṭagopāla, the commentator of *Kāvyaprakāśa* who for the first time points out that Mahimabhaṭṭa was indeed influenced by Buddhistic thought. When discussing the views of Mahimabhaṭṭa on *vyañjanā* in the Vth *Ullāsa* of *Kāvyaprakāśa*, Bhaṭṭagopāla introduces the former as *saugatamatānusārenānumānaikapradhāno mahimā.*[3] Similarly, Ruyyaka, the commentator of *Vyaktiviveka* seems to assume on several occasions the Buddhistic orientation of Mahimabhaṭṭa's thought. Thus, commenting on Mahimabhaṭṭa's conclusion of *lakṣaṇā* in *anumāna*, he makes the interesting observation that though Buddhists accept *lakṣaṇā* as an *arthavyāpāra*, it should actually be considered as *anumāna*, thereby suggesting that Mahimabhaṭṭa subscribed to Buddhistic positions in such matters.[4] Again, on Mahimabhaṭṭa's comment that pain is a specific form of experience, he observes that 'this has been stated as per Buddhistic principles'.[5] Similarly, when Mahimabhaṭṭa points out that we cognise a particular type of bird characterized by *garuḍatva* from the line *moham harer vihaṅgamo hantu*. Ruyyaka explains that *garuḍatva* is reckoned as a class characteristic as per Buddhistic principles according to which garuḍas are many.[6] From all these, it is obvious that Buddhistic philosophy exerted great influence on Mahimabhaṭṭa, though he was Śaivite in his basic orientation.

## III

The influence of medieval Buddhistic logic as developed by Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti is discernible in a pronounced manner in Mahimabhaṭṭa's concept of *anumāna*, wherein he includes all varieties of Dhvani. Accroding to Ānandavardhana, the so called suggested meaning (*vyaṅgyārtha*) is revealed to a man of taste by a power called *vyañjanā*, which exists in word and sense, in addition to the normal functions of *abhidhā* and *lakṣaṇā*. Mahimabhaṭṭa disputes this claim and establishes that words do not have any power save *abhidhā*, the denotative function and all the other senses are just intelligent deductions from the denoted meaning, made by a discerning reader. Mahimabhaṭṭa avers that both the secondary meaning (*lakṣyārtha*) and the suggested meaning (*vyaṅgyārtha*) are thus deduced meanings, inferred from the expressed meaning. He also demonstrates that there is invariable concomitance between the expressed meaning and the secondary/suggested meanings.

Mahimabhaṭṭa's concept of invariabale concomitance is based on the notions of causality (*tadutpatti*) and identity (*tādātmya*). Accordingly, two facts are deemed to be invariably related if one is the cause of the other and if both are identical. Thus smoke and fire are related through causal connection; and since there will always be fire if there is smoke, we can infer the former from the latter. Similarly, *āmra* 'mango tree' and 'tree' are having the relationship of identity and when we know that a thing is *āmra*, we can infer that it is a tree. This is an instance of the identical relation existing between genus and species. Mahimabhaṭṭa follows

the above Buddhist position in his concept of *anumāna*, wherein he includes all instances of *vyaṅgya-vyañjaka-bhāva*. The following *saṅgrahakārikas* of *Vyaktiviveka* make his position clear:

*vācyapratyayayor nāsti vyaṅgyavyañjakatārthayoḥ/*
*tayoh pradīpaghaṭavat sāhityenāprakāśanāt//*
*pakṣadharmatvasambandhavyāptisiddhivyapekṣaṇāt*
*vṛkṣatvāmratvayor yadvat yadvac cānaladhūmayoḥ//*
*anumānatvam evātra yuktaṃ tallakṣaṇānvayāt/*[7]

The main difference between the positions of Buddhists and Naiyāyikas is that the former insists that invariable concomitance, there should be 'an inner necessity connecting the two terms of the relation'. While to the latter mere invariable presence is necessary between the major and minor terms. To illustrate, the former will not accept propositions like 'all animals with cloven hoofs have horns', which will be perfectly acceptable to the latter.[8] This major difference is lost sight of by some historians of poetics who wrongly make Mahimabhaṭṭa a follower of Nyāya logic.

Mahimabhaṭṭa makes use of the cause-effect relationship to explain most of the instances of Dhvani and the relation of identity to explain the *arthāntarasaṅkramitavācya* - sub-variety of *avivakṣitavācya*. We can illustrate his concept of *vyāpti* based on causal relationship in the following example:

'O, ascetic, you can wander freely since that dog
has been killed by the lion on the banks of Godāvarī.'

Here the presence of the lion is the probans; the undesirability of wandering the probandum; and their

invariable concomitance is based on direct cause-effect relationship.[9]

Mahimabhaṭṭa makes use of the relationship of identity to explain the cognition of meaning in instances like the following, which employ proper nouns like 'Rāma' in a suggestive manner.

'I am Rāma, I shall withstand everything'.

Here the word *rāma* does not simply give forth the idea of an individual called Rāma. On the other hand, it conveys the idea of the person Rāma, who has endured many calamities and mishaps in his life, all of which are understood by the reader on consideration of the context. The relationship between Rāma the individual and Rāma who is hardened by the endurances of calamities of life is that of identity (*tādātmya*), as between a tree and a *śiṃśapā*.[10]

## IV

Another salient feature of Mahimabhaṭṭa's logic which shows Buddhistic influence is that it allows the possibility of indirect relations also, based on negation just like direct relation based on the presence of the minor term. Dharmakīrti speaks of eleven of such examples, viz. (1) *svabhāvānupalabdhi* (simple negation contained in all types of negative perceptual judgement), (2) *kāryānupalabdhi* (negation of effect, on the basis of which negation of its efficient case is inferred), (3) *vyāpakānupalabdhi* (deduction of the negation of one fact from the negation of another fact), (4) *svabhāvaviruddhopalabdhi* (affirmation of an incompatible fact, from which the negation of its counterpart follows),

(5) *viruddhakāryopalabdhi* (affirmation of an incompatible effect from which the negation of the counterpart of its cause follows), (6) *viruddhavyāptopalabdhi* (affirmation of an incompatible subordinate), (7) *kārya-viruddhopalabdhi* (affirmation of incompatibility with the effect), (8) *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi* (affirmation of incompatibility with an inconclusive fact), (9) *kāraṇānupalabdhi* (negation of cause), (10) *kāraṇaviruddhopalabdhi* (affirmation of incompatibility with the cause of the denied fact, and (11) *kāraṇaviruddhopalabdhi* (affirmation of effect, produced by something incompatible with the cause of the denied fact).[11]

Mahimabhaṭṭa makes use of some of the above formulae in his explanation of the cognition of the suggested meaning. The following instances may be cited:

'O mendicant, wander freely, since that dog has been killed by the lion'.

Accroding to Mahimabhaṭṭa, this is an example of either *svabhāvaviruddhopalabdhi* or *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi*. In the former case, the cause is the presence of the lion and the effect is free wandering, and since they are mutually incompatible, the presence of the former leads one to the conclusion of the absence of the latter.[12]

In the case of *vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhi*, the inferred meaning - the absence of the act of wandering - is generated by misgivings of danger, the absence of which is the major premise for action.

An instance of *kāraṇānupalabdhi*:

'Himālaya could not give his daughter to Śiva since the latter had not requested for it.'

Here the absence of the request is the reason for the absence of the act of giving.[13]

## V

There are many other minor points in Mahimabhaṭṭa's *Vyaktiviveka* which also indicate the extent of the influence of Buddhistic philosophy on him. Thus., Dharmakīrti's argument that illustrative example is not a necessary part of syllogism is accepted by Mahimabhaṭṭa also. Mahimabhaṭṭa, while substantiating the argument that all linguistic statements are propositions, refers to the opponents view that in that case, all sentences should also contain illustrative examples. He counters this view by citing the arguments of Dharmakīrti himself, who maintains that examples are not necessary for a learned person.

> *tadbhāvahetubhāvau hi dṛṣṭānte tadavedinaḥ*
> *khyāpyete viduṣāṃ vācyo hetur eva hi tādṛśaḥ*[14]
>
> The relationships of identity and causation are made known through illustrative examples only in the case of an ignorant person. In the case of really learned people, the mention of reason will suffice.

Mahimabhaṭṭa also maintains that in a syllogism, it is not necessary to mention *pratijñā* 'thesis' and *nigamana* 'conclusion' separately, as they are implied. He cites a relevant passage from an anymous source:

> *pratijñāyāḥ eva tāvad gamyamānārthāyāḥ*
> *vacanaṃ punarvacanam. kiṃ punar asyāḥ*
> *punarvacanam ity apārthakaṃ nigamanam*[15]

Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti also maintain that 'the real members of a syllogism are the general rule and its application to an individual instance', viz. *avinābhāva* and *pakṣadharmatā*.[16] Evidently, this must be the source of Mahimabhaṭṭa's position.

Another important philosophical position adopted by Mahimabhaṭṭa on Buddhism is the difference he maintains between the objects perceived in direct perception and comprehended through language. Accroding to him, objects have got two aspects, viz. the generic and the specific. The former is a mental construct (*vikalpa*) and can be understood only through the use of language. The latter is revealed only through direct perception. However, poets endowed by the gift of imagination, are able to visualize this specific aspect and depict it through the figure of *svabhāvokti*.[17]

It seems that Mahimabhaṭṭa's views are influenced by the distinction made and maintained in Buddhistic thought between *svalakṣaṇa*, the 'thing-in-itself' directly comprehended in perception and *sāmanyalakṣaṇa*, the generic aspect, the aspect comprehended through inference. In the words of Th. Stcherbatsky:

> "The doctrine that there are two and only two sources of knowledge means that there are two radically distinct sources of cognition, the one which is a reflex of ultimate reality and the other which is a capacity of constructing the images in which this reality appears in the phenomenal world. ..... In perception, the image of the object is cognised directly; i.e. vividly. In

> inference, it is cognised indirectly, i.e. vaguely, or abstractly through its mark."
> (*Buddhist Logic*, p. 74.)

Mahimabhaṭṭa maintains that the meaning comprehended through language is also is generic, as in inference, but in *svabhāvokti*, this limitation is somehow transcended.

## VI

We see decisive influence of Buddhistic outlook in Mahimabhaṭṭa's thought at a deeper metaphysical level also. Mahimabhaṭṭa maintains that even though the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicāribhāvas* presented through poetry are unreal, they give forth inference of Rasa, which culminates in moral instructions of the do's and don'ts of life. As to how an illusory knowledge can serve such a practical function, Mahimabhaṭṭa refers to the following *kārikā* of *pramāṇavārttika* which reiterates the practical efficacy of even false knowledge.

> *maṇipradīpaprabhayor maṇibuddhyābhidhāvatoḥ mithyājñānāviśeṣe 'pi viśeṣo 'rthakriyām prati*[18]

> Between two persons who run towards the lustres of jewel and lamp, mistaking them to be jewel, even though there is agreement in false knowledge, there is difference with regard to practical efficacy.

Thus, the person mistaking the lustre of jewel for jewel itself finally takes hold of it following the leads given by false knowledge. This illustrates the

Buddhist position that 'Knowledge may have value for life, but its metaphysical significance is next to nothing'.[19] Mahimabhaṭṭa finds this a handy formulae to explain the aesthetic world, which, bereft of objective reality still possesses practical utility. He maintains that it will be ridiculous if we apply the test of validity to the facts presented in fiction and designates inference in the realm of imagination as *kāvyānumiti*, thus bracketing it from ordinary inference, which is a means of valid knowledge.

## VII

Thus, a close study of the *Vyaktiviveka* will bring forth the extent and depth of Buddhistic influence on Mahimabhaṭṭa. Nevertheless, Mahimabhaṭṭa does not seem to be influenced by the religious side of Buddhism in the least, as he was a staunch follower of Kashmiri Śaivism. He does not seem to be influenced by the *Apoha* theory of language either, as he believed that words denote positive meanings. In short, Mahimabhaṭṭa can be taken to be a logician anchored to traditional theology and religion, who nevertheless made profuse use of concepts of medieval Buddhist logic.

## REFERENCES

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2. *Indian Aesthetics*, vol. I, pp. 325-335.
3. *Sāhityacūḍāmaṇi*, p. 153.
4. *Vyaktiviveka-vyākhyāna*, R.P. Dwivedi's edition, p. 48
5. ibid. p. 376.
6. ibid. p. 279.
7. *Vyaktiviveka* I, p. 33-35.

8. See M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 201.
9. *Vyaktiviveka*, p. 463.
10. ibid. p. 474.
11. Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhistic Logic*, pp. 370-381.
12. *Vyaktiviveka*, pp. 463-466.
13. ibid. p. 53.
14. *Pramāṇavārtika* II, p. 27.
15. *Vyaktiviveka*, p. 443.
16. Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhistic Logic*, p. 280.
17. *Vyaktiviveka*, p. 452.
18. *Pramāṇavārtika* I, p. 57.
19. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 209.

*SRIRAMULA RAJESWARA SARMA*

# TRANSLATION OF SCIENTIFIC TEXTS INTO SANSKRIT UNDER SAWAI JAI SINGH

1.1 Translation played an important role in almost all encounters between cultures. A comprehensive account of this role has yet to be written. Some aspects of this are very well known, in others our knowledge is still fragmentary.

When China discovered Buddhism, a large corpus of Buddhist texts in Sanskrit and Prakrit was translated into Chinese during the first millennium after Christ, by Chinese as well as Indian monk-scholars. In his *Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka* (Oxford 1883), Bunyiu Nanjio listed as many as 1662 texts thus translated. A later catalogue by Sylvain Lévi and J. Takakusu entitled *Hobogirin* (Paris 1929 ff) raises this number to 2184 texts.[1] According to Professor P.C. Bagchi, "some of these translations also had great literary value and came to be looked upon as classics in Chinese literature".[2]

Tibetans took to Buddhism somewhat later – in the seventh century under the reign of King Sron-bstan-sgam-po (b. 617 A.D.). His courtier Thon-mi Sam-bhota is said to be the first translator of Buddhist texts into Tibetan. From his time to the fourteenth century, some 4566 texts were translated into Tibetan, by Tibetans and Indians. These were arranged by Bu-ston (1290-1364) into two groups called respectively *Bkaḥ-ḥgyur* or *Kanjur* (the Word of the Buddha) and *Bstan-ḥgyur* or *Tanjur* (the Treatises).[3] Tibetan translations were not only more numerous than the Chinese, they were also more accurate, so accurate that the original can be reconstructed from the Tibetan without any loss in nuance or in verbal flavour.[4] Many of these Buddhist texts survive today only because they have been thus translated into Chinese or Tibetan.

1.2 Thus oftentimes translation was not just a tool for exchange of ideas; it was also an indispensable means of preservation. A notable case in this sense is the preservation and later dissemination of Greek science through Arabic translations in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. under the Abbasids. This momentous enterprise in the history of ideas was well chronicled by De Lacy O' Leary.[5]

Arabs had a parallel encounter with Indian scientific ideas about the same time or a little earlier. This encounter gave rise to the Sindhind school of astronomy, to the dissemination of the Indian number system and Indian mathematics, and so on. This has been discussed often enough, but there are still many grey areas in the historiography of this encounter.

1.3 Nearer home, the history of translation within India has had an abysmally poor documentation, although literary composition in many regional languages began with translations from Sanskrit. An important milestone in the history of translation in India is the translation of texts from Sanskrit into Persian and vice versa. The last phase of this activity took place under the auspices of Sawai Jai Singh (1688-1743).

2.1 Sawai Jai Singh's majestic astronomical instruments[6] overshadow his achievements in other realms of intellectual activity which also merit attention. One such activity is the translation into Sanskrit of scientific texts from Arabic and Persian, and to a lesser extent also from European languages.[7] In this programme, Jai Singh had the support of two long traditions. First, the eclectic approach of the Indian *jyotiṣīs* who did not hesitate in borrowing extensively from diverse sources like Mesopotamia, Greece, the Islamic World, and later also from the modern West. The second tradition that supported Jai Singh's translation programme emanates from the Islamic culture area where scientific texts were more systematically rendered into Arabic from the eighth century onwards. The translation or adaptation of Sanskrit astronomical and medical texts at Baghdad under Caliph al-Mansur in the eighth century and somewhat later of Greek astronomical texts, and subsequently their transmission to Europe is too well known to be reiterated here.

2.2 In India also Muslim kings sponsored transfer of knowledge from Sanskrit before Jai Singh undertook similar work. Notable among these are Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (reign: 1351-1388) and Jalāluddīn Akbar (reign: 1556-1605).

3.1 In the second half of the fourteenth century, Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq gathered at his court at Delhi a number of Muslim, Hindu and Jaina scholars and attempted a systematic exchange of ideas. The names of some of these scholars and the texts they translated are available if not always the translations themselves. A booty of 1300 Sanskrit manuscripts from the Jvālāmukhī temple in the Nagarkot kingdom in Kangra Valley aroused Fīrūz's interest in Hindu learning.[8] From these manuscripts he got translated into Persian the following six works, as reported in the *Sīrat-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, an anonymous but contemporary chronicle:[9]

i. Varāhamihira's *Bṛahatsaṃhitā* was translated by 'Abdul 'Azīz Shams.[10]

ii. Another Sanskrit work of identical content was rendered into Persian under the title *Dalāíl-i Fīrūz Shāhī* by 'Izz al-Dīn Khālid Khānī.[11]

iii. A Sanskrit work dealing with good and bad omens for hunting was translated with the title *Shikārnāma Fatah Khān.*

iv. Likewise, the *Sārāvalī*, obviously of *Kalyāṇavarman* (A.D. 800), was also rendered into Persian.

v. So also the *Haramekhalā* which "deals with various kinds of miracles and many wonders of prophecy."[12]

vi. An astrological text was translated but its name cannot be deciphered from the expression *"dāstāhā"* used in the *Sīrat-i-Fīrūz Shāhī.*

Of these six titles, only the first two appear to be extant. The translation of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* is available in several manuscripts. Eight chapters dealing with idol

worship and the like were not translated as repugnant to Islam. However a proper study is still wanting on the accuracy and quality of translation of the remaining chapters.

3.2 Two Jaina monks, Mahendra Sūri and his pupil Malayendu Sūri were at Fīrūz's court. These two must have helped in the translation of the Sanskrit texts. They were also responsible for the transfer of knowledge in the reverse direction, namely, from the Islamic world to Sanskrit. In 1370 Mahendra Sūri composed the first Sanskrit manual on the astrolabe, a versatile astronomical instrument which enjoyed a great reputation among the Muslims, after consulting, as he says, the ocean-like vast literature produced by the Yavanas on this subject.[13] We do not know exactly what these Islamic texts on the astrolabes may have been. Perhaps they included the various works Al-Bīrūnī wrote on the astrolabe.[14] But it is certain that both Mahendra Sūri and his pupil Malayendu Sūri, who wrote a commentary on his teacher's work around 1382, were helped from the Muslim side by persons like the anonymous author of the *Sīrat-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, which contains an interesting chapter on Fīrūz's experiments with the astrolabe. A comparison of this chapter with Mahendra Sūri's manual is essential in order to understand the level of interaction between the Muslim and Indian scholars at Fīrūz's court.[15]

4.1 More details are available from the reign of Akbar on the nature of exchanges of ideas through translation. Akbar desired that the Muslim intelligentsia be made familiar with the classics of Hindu thought so that they have a better interaction with Hindus and therefore established the *Maktabkhānā* or bureau of translation.[16]

This is not the place to discuss the Sanskrit texts that were rendered into Persian in this *Maktabkhānā*,[17] although it will be quite instructive to know which works from the vast Sanskrit literature aroused the interest of the Muslims. What is immediately relevant for our purpose is the procedure of translation, as reported by two of the chief participants, viz. Abul Fazl and Abdul Qādir Badāyūnī.

4.2 According to these writers, translation was not performed by single scholars proficient in both source language and the target language, in this case, Sanskrit and Persian. Rather the task was accomplished by teams of scholars, some proficient in Sanskrit and others in Persian. They did the work in three stages. First, Hindu or Jaina scholars prepared a paraphrase in Hindi of the Sanskrit text to be translated. In the second stage, this Hindi paraphrase was translated into Persian by one of the several Muslim courtiers. Finally, the Persian translation was polished and put into elegant prose and verse by one of the more accomplished scholars, often the emperor himself supplying the felicitous phrase. The Hindus who prepared the Hindi paraphrase were known as *ma'barān* (interpreters) and the Muslims who rendered the paraphrase into Persian were styled *mutarajjimān* (translators).[18]

What resulted in this process cannot be termed an exact translation but rather a Persian paraphrase into which often the mediator's explanatory sentences crept in. Francis Gladwyn says of the *Razmnāma*, the Persian version of the *Mahābhārata*, that "it was nothing more than an extract, very indifferently executed, many beautiful descriptions and episodes being entirely omitted".[19]

4.3 One scientific work was also translated in this manner. It was Bhāskarācārya's *Līlāvatī* on arithmetic, which Faizi, Abul Fazl's brother, rendered into Persian.[20] Faizi is said to be a scholar of Sanskrit but John Taylor who studied the Persian version says that it has many omissions, and departs in some passages so far from the original as to "induce the suspicion that Faizi contended himself with writing down the verbal explanation afforded by his assistant".[21] Besides the *Līlāvatī*, one more scientific text appears to have been translated into Persian. Unfortunately, its name is variously misspelt as *tājak* or *nājak*; perhaps it is some work on *jātaka*, i.e. horoscopy.[22]

4.4 In the reverse direction, at least one scientific work was translated into Sanskrit, namely Ulūgh Beg's Astronomical Tables. While Abul Fazl and Fatullah Shirāzī explained the meaning of the original text, Kishan Joshī, Gaṅgādhar and Mahesh Mahānand wrote it down in Sanskrit.[23] This translation seems to have been made use of by *jyotiṣīs* like Kamalākara and Nityānanda later on.

But many more Sanskrit works appeared outside the confines of the *Maktabkhānā*, which betray a knowledge of Islamic astronomy. These have been studied by David Pingree in his "Islamic Astronomy in Sanskrit".[24] In this context, the following questions arise, for which we do not yet have adequate answers. Who were the Muslim interlocutors of these Hindu *jyotiṣīs*, especially in Varanasi? What were the Islamic texts that were made accessible to Hindu *jyotiṣīs* through oral explanation?

4.5 A number of Hindu astrologers were, of course, officially connected with the Mughal court at Agra and

later at Fatehpur Sikri and Delhi. As I have shown elsewhere,[25] Akbar introduced a system of appointing Hindus as royal astrologers with the title Jotik Rāi (from Sanskrit *Jyotiṣarāja/rāya*). The *Akbarnāmā* reports that the Jotik Rāi prepared the horoscopes of Akbar, his heir apparent Salīm and also of other sons. The identity of this astrologer is not revealed but it is quite probable that he was *Nīlakaṇṭha*, the author of the *Tājika-nīlakaṇṭhī*, the most popular work on the *Tājika* (i.e. 'Islamic' system of astrology).

Jahāngīr had two Jotik Rāi-s; perhaps one succeeded the other. These were Keśava and Paramānanda. The latter composed *Jahangīra-vinoda-ratnākara* in honour of his patron. Kṛṣṇa Daivajña, who wrote learned commentaries on Bhāskara's *Bījagaṇita* and Keśava's *Jātakapaddhati*, was a favorite of Jahāngīr. He must be identical with the Kishan Joshi who took part in the translation of Ulūgh Beg's astronomical Tables into Sanskrit.

Shāh Jahān's royal astrologer Śrīmālajit enjoyed a more bombastic title *Vedāṅgarāya* instead of the mere *Jotik Rāi*. This tradition was continued by the feudatories also. For example, Kevalarāma received the title *Jyotiṣarāya* at Sawai Jai singh's court. These Hindu astrologers and astronomers who were patronized by the Mughal rulers and by other Muslim noblemen had the opportunity of exposure to Islamic astronomy and astrology and may have disseminated this knowledge to their kinsmen and colleagues at Varanasi and other places.

4.6 This interaction at the Mughal Court, coupled with Ṭoḍar Mal's introduction of Persian as the bureaucratic

language, gave rise to a new kind of literature. These are hand-books for learning Persian through the medium of Sanskrit. These contained generally bilingual vocabularies in verse, though one or two provide also grammatical rules couched in the sūtra style. Notable among these are Bihāri Kṛṣṇadāsa's *Pāraśīkaprakāśa*, which contains both grammar and vocabulary and was dedicated to Akbar;[26] and Śrīmālajit Vedāṅgarāya's *Saṃskṛta-pārasīka-padaprakāśa* which was composed in the reign of Shāh Jahān and aims to teach Islamic calendar and technical terms related to Islamic astronomy and astrology.[27] About fifteen such works are extant today.[28]

Thus, already before Jai Singh's time, some ground was laid for translation of texts, both scientific and non-scientific, from Arabic/Persian to Sanskrit and vice versa.

5.1 But Sawai Jai Singh aimed higher. Realizing the superiority of Islamic observational astronomy, he wished to have accurate and full translations of Islamic texts on astronomy and not just a paraphrase. Therefore, he collected many Islamic texts[29] and gathered Hindu, Muslim, and – later on – European astronomers at his court.[30]

5.2 The translations that emerged from the joint endeavors of these astronomers are as follows:

i. *Rekhāgaṇita*, a Sanskrit translation of Euclid's *Elements* from the thirteenth century Arabic version of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī by *Jagannātha* in about 1727.[31]

ii. *Ukarā* or *Kaṭara*, a Sanskrit translation of the *Spherica* of Theodosius from the Arabic version of Qusṭā

ibn Lūqā al-Ba'abakī by Nayanasukha Upādhyāya in 1729.[32]

iii. *Śaraha-tajkara Varjandī*, Sanskrit rendering of chapter 11 of the second book of Naṣīr al-Dīn's *Tadhkira* together with the extensive commentary (*Sharh*) of al-Barjandī by Nayanasukha also in 1729.[33]

iv. *Samrāṭsiddhānta* or *Siddhāntasārakaustubha*, translation of Ptolemy's *Almagest* from Naṣīr al-Dīn's Arabic recension by Jagannātha in about 1732.[34]

v. *Yantrarāja-risālā bīsa bāba* or *Yantrarāja-vicāra-viṃśādhyāyī*, Sanskrit translation of Naṣīr al-Dīn's Persian manual on the astrolabe, *Risālat al-Usṭurlāb* in twenty chapters.[35] At the end of the manuscript copy of this work, no. 81865 of Varanasi Sanskrit University, there occurs the following sentence:

> *iti nayanasukhopādhyāyakṛtā yantrarāja-vicāraviṃśādhyāyī arabīṭaḥ saṃkṛte nītā/*

"Thus [ends] the Nayanasukha Upādhyāya's composition, the *Yantrarāja-vicāra-viṃśādhyāyī*, which has been rendered into Sanskrit from the Arabic."

This sentence led to the erroneous ascription of this translation to Nayanasukha. However, this sentence does not merit credence as it is clearly a late addition, in a different hand writing, by one who was unaware of the fact that, unlike Naṣīr al-Dīn's other works, this tract was originally written in Persian and not in Arabic. Other manuscripts do not contain this sentence. Therefore this translation has to be treated as anonymous, at least until other evidence is available.

vi. *Dṛkpakṣasāraṇī*, supposed to be a Sanskrit rendering of La Hire Tables, by Kevalarāma.[36]

Besides these, there are some anonymous works which may partly be translations or adaptations from Islamic sources, such as the following:

vii. *Yantraprakāra*, on the construction of various astronomical instruments.[37]

viii. *Sarvadeśīya-jarakālī-yantra* on the construction and use of the universal astrolabe invented by Ibn al-Zarqālluḥ in Spain in ca. 1075.[38]

ix. *Hayatagrantha*, a Sanskrit rendering of the Persian *Risālā dar hay'at* by al-Qūshjī, translated for Jai Singh (?).[39]

At the Sawai Mansingh II Museum at Jaipur, there exist several manuscripts containing astronomical tables such as *Phiraṅgi-candra-vedhopayoginī sāraṇī*[40] (tables useful for observing the moon according to Europeans) and *Laiyaravedhapatrāṇi*[41] (La Hire Tables). These
must be translations from European sources. In early 1998, Professor David Pingree has catalogued these manuscripts. When this catalogue is published, we would know the full extent of such translations and their sources.

5.3 However, what concerns us here is the methodology of the translation and its accuracy. On the first question, Nayanasukha and the above-mentioned *Yantraprakāra* offer some clues.

At the beginning of his Sanskrit rendering of Theodosius' *Spherica*, Nayanasukha explains how he made the translation:

*seyaṃ mahamada-ābida-saṃjñena kathitā*
*nayanasukhopādhyaiḥ nibadhyate.* [42]
"This [text] was explained by one named Muhammad Abid and is being rendered [into Sanskrit] by Nayanasukha Upādhyāya."

The same fact is repeated at the end of the book:

*idam arabībhāṣātaḥ ābida-saṃjñaiḥ kathitaṃ*
*nayanasukhopādhyaiḥ saṃskṛte grathitam.*[43]
"This [text], which was explained by one named Abid from the Arabic language, is composed in Sanskrit by Nayanasukha Upādhyāya."

Again, at the conclusion of his translation of Naṣīr al-Dīn's *Tadhkira*, Nayanasukha informs:

*idaṃ mahamadaa-ābida-saṃjñaiḥ kathitaṃ nayanasukhopādhyaiḥ saṃskṛtaśabdair nibaddham.*[44]
"This [text] was explained by Muhammad Abid and was put into Sanskrit words by Nayanasukha Upādhyāya."

Thus the procedure adopted was somewhat similar to that in Akbar's *Maktabkhānā* and perhaps at other Muslim courts as well. At Jai Singh's court also there were interpreters (*ma'barān*) like Muhammad Abid and translators (*mutarajjimān*) like Nayanasukha. But there are two essential differences. First, both the interpreter and the translator at Jaipur were well versed in astronomy; they only had to cross the linguistic barrier

through a third language which must have been some form of Hindi. At Akbar's *Maktabkhānā*, the mythological and theological implications of the Sanskrit texts were not easy to understand and were often repugnant to persons like Badāyūnī.[45] Again, at the *Maktabkhānā* what were translated were not full Sanskrit texts but short paraphrases in Hindi.

Jai Singh's translators, if at all, erred on the other side. After comparing Nayanasukha's rendering of the *Tadhkira* with the Arabic original, David Pingree concludes that 'Muhammad Ābida and Nayanasukha did not simply render the Arabic into Sanskrit literally, but expanded those passages that they found particularly difficult'.[46] Modern translation theory would call this semantic as well as communicative translation; 'semantic' because it is faithful to the original in the source language and 'communicative' because it addresses itself to the needs of the audience in the target language by providing explanation of difficult concepts.[47]

5.4 Furthermore, the *Yantraprakāra*, which contains descriptions of several astronomical instruments culled from diverse sources, demonstrates that occasionally first drafts of translations were prepared by junior pundits which were later polished and edited by accomplished scholars like Jagannātha or Nayanasukha who then gave their name to the translation.

At the beginning of his astronomical investigations, Jai Singh seems to have got only those portions of the *Almagest* translated which dealt with instruments and collected such passages in the *Yantraprakāra*. Thus this manual contains, among others, translation of passages

of the *Almagest* dealing with the following five instruments:

i. *Yāmyottara-yantra* (solstitial armillary)
ii. *Yāmyottara-bhitti-yantra* (mural quadrant)
iii. *Dhāt al-Halaq* (armillary sphere)
iv. *Dhāt al-Shu'batayn* (triquetrum)
v. *Dhāt al-Thuqbatayn* (diopter).

At a later stage when Jagannātha translated the entire *Almagest*, he incorporated into it the already translated passages, after editing them.[48] This becomes evident from the following facts:

In the *Yantraprakāra*, the description of the *Dhāt al-Thuqbatayn* is followed by a marginal gloss explaining the literal meaning of the Arabic name of the instrument:

> *jātuḥ-śabdena sāhebaḥ svāmī. śuka-śabdena chidram. taddvayaṃ śukavataina-śabdenocyate. tayoḥ svāmī chidradvayasya svāmīty arthaḥ.*[49]
> The word *jātuḥ* means 'lord' (*sāheb*) or 'owner' (*savāmī*); *śuka* means 'aperture'; 'two apertures' is denoted by the expression *śukavataina*; 'their owner', i.e. 'the owner of two aperturers' is the meaning [of the Arabic name of this instrument].[50]

Note the word *sāheb* in the explanation here. This must have been the word used by the Muslim interpreter while explaining the Arabic *dhāt*. The pundit rendered it as *svāmī* but retained the *sāheb* also. This explanation of the name is, of course, not part of the text of the *Almagest* – it was just given by the Muslim interpreter to the Hindu pundit – and Jagannātha dropped it from

the translation of the *Almagest*,[51] for such an explanation is necessary only when one encounters the foreign word for the first time.

Had Jagannātha himself translated the passage in question, he would not have made the clumsy construction 'lord of two apertures'. With his reputed mastery of Sanskrit and alleged familiarity of Arabic, he could have drawn upon the analogy of Sanskrit compounds of the *Bahuvrīhi* class and explained the name as 'that which has two apertures'.

In another instance, the etymology of the name given is clearly off the mark; either the mediator did not know the history of the instrument well enough to explain its name or the *jyotiṣī* did not understand the explanation. This is the etymology of *Suds Fakhri* given in the *Yantraprakāra*:

> *asmin yantre vṛttaṣaṣṭhāṃśasya daśaghaṭikāyāḥ prayojanam. tasmāt phakarīnāmakaś ca tatprabhuḥ. sudas nāma ṣaṣṭhāṃśaḥ. tena ṣaṣṭhāṃśayantraṃ kṛtam. tasya nāma sujasaphakarīti.*[52]
>
> In this instrument, a sixth part of the circle, i.e. ten *ghaṭikās*, is made use of. Hence he who is named Fakhrī is its lord. Sujas means 'sextant'. He made this sextant instrument and its name is *Suds Fakhrī*.[53]

In actual fact, however, Abū Maḥmūd al-Khujandi invented this instrument in 994 and named it after his patron Fakhr al-Dawla.[54] Probably the mediator was explaining that the expression 'Fakhrī' refers to the patron/lord of the maker, and the translator may have confused between the maker and his patron.

Be that as it may, a comparison of the description of this instrument as given in the *Yantraprakāra* on the one hand and in Jagannātha's *Yantrādhyāya* on the other will show that Jagannātha polished the former version considerably.[55] The same is the case with the description of the instrument called *Jayaprakāśa*.[56]

Does that mean that the entire *Almagest*, as well as other texts, were translated by hacks with the help of Muslim interpreters and that Jagannātha, Nayanasukha and others edited the translations subsequently? It is difficult to answer this question but such possibility cannot completely be ruled out.

5.5 Regarding the accuracy of translation, I have compared the description of the five instruments in the *Samrāṭsiddhāta* with those in the English translation of the *Almagest*. In spite of the fact that the Sanskrit version was made from an Arabic translation of the Greek *Almagest* and that the English translation was made directly from the Greek, there does not exist great divergence. But this has yet to be established for the entire text. Indeed, other texts too need to be studied from the viewpoint of accuracy of translation and the terminology must be compared in the three versions, viz. source language, mediate language and the target language.

5.6 – A few more words need to be said about the vernacular translations undertaken at Jai Singh's court. He caused a large quantum of religious and devotional literature translated into Brajabhāṣā and Rājasthānī, and this practice was emulated by his son Madho Singh also. Besides these, a few scientific texts also seem to have been translated. The Khas Mohor collection of Sawai

Mansingh II Museum at Jaipur has two vernacular versions of Bhāskara's *Līlāvatī*. The first is the *Līlāvatī-pāṭī-parikrama* (sic! read *-parikarma*; No. 5074) and the second *Līlāvatī Bhāṣā* by Lāla Canda (Nos. 3626, 5075).[57]

An interesting case of translation of a book on perspective drawing, probably from the Portuguese, into Hindi was noticed by Virendra Sharma.[58] Another interesting case of translation into the vernacular can be seen in the plaques attached to some portable instruments in the stores of the observatory at Jaipur. These finely engraved copper plaques explain the function of each instrument in simple vernacular.[59]

5.7 In sum, Sawai Jai Singh understood the value of translation in the exchange of ideas and his pundits achieved a high degree of accuracy in translation. With the scientific knowledge expanding at an ever rapid rate today, Jai Singh's method of transmission of science offers a workable model.

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23. ibid. p. 110.
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31. *Rekhāgaṇita*, ed. H. Dhruva and K.S. Trivedi, Bombay 1901, 1902.
32. *Sāvajūsayūsakṛtā Ukarā*, ed. Vibhūtibhūṣaṇa Bhaṭṭācārya, Varanasi 1978; see also Pingree, p. 319; David Pingree, *Census of Exact Sciences in Sanskrit* (henceforth CESS), A-3, Philadelphia 1976, p. 132.
33. Pingree 319; CESS, A-4, Philadelphia 1981, p. 122.
34. *Samrāṭsiddhānta*, ed. R.S. Sharma, New Delhi 1967-1969; *Siddhāntasamrāṭ*, ed. Muralīdhara Caturveda, Sagar 1976.
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36. Pingree 320.
37. *Sawai Jai Singh's Yantraprakāra*, ed & tr. Sreeramula Rajeswara Sarma, supplement to *Studies in History of Medicine and Science*, 10-11 (1986-87).
38. Cf. Sreeramula Rajeswara Sarma, 'The Ṣafīha Zarqāliyya in India', in: Josep Casulleras and Julió Samso (ed), *From Baghdad to Barcelona: Studies in Islamic Exact Sciences in Honour of Prof. Juan Vernet*, Barcelona 1996, pp. 718-735.
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42. *Ukarā* (see n. 25), p. 1, fn. 1.
43. ibid. p. 55.
44. CESS. A-4, p. 122.
45. *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, tr. H. Blochmann, p. 111, n. 2.
46. Pingree 319.
47. Cf. Peter Newmark, *Approaches to Translation*, Oxford, etc. 1982, p. 39.
48. Cf. Sreeramula Rajeswara Sarma (ed & tr), *Yantraprakāra*, p. 4.
49. ibid. p. 20.
50. ibid. p. 61.
51. *Samrāṭsiddhānta*, p. 466.
52. *Yantraprakāra*, p. 24.

53. ibid. p. 72.
54. ibid.
55. cf. *Siddhāntasamrāṭ*, ed. Muralīdhara Caturveda, pp. 7-8.
56. *Yantraprakāra*, pp. 12-15; *Siddhāntasamrāṭ*, pp. 11-13.
57. Cf. Gopal Narayan Bahura, *Literary Heritage of the Rulers of Amber and Jaipur*, Jaipur 1976.
58. Virendra N. Sharma, 'Pratibimba-Siddhānta', *Indian Journal of History of Science*.
59. A separate gallery has been built recently within the compound of the Jaipur Observatory to house these portable instruments.

*D. SATYANARAYANA*

# KRIYĀYOGA

## I

**Manuscript Material:** The *New Catalogues Catalogorum* (vol. 5, p. 137) notices the following under the title *Kriyāyoga*:

(1.) *Kriyāyoga* quoted in Ānandatīrtha's *Bhāgavatatātparyanirṇaya*, Sarvamūla edn., p. 78a.

(2.) *Kriyāyoga* by Vallabha. Udaipur II. 134.1 (36).

(3.) *Kriyāyoga* in two chapters on greatness of Rāmatāraka-mantra by (Ādi)Veṅkaṭayogin, pupil of Svayaṃprakāśendrayogin, Burnell 112b. TD. 6716.

(4.) *Kriyāyoga* by Viṭṭhala Ācārya. Hall p. 200.

(5.) *Kriyāyoga* Bud. Cordier III. p. 261.

(6.) *Kriyāyogasaṃvāda* quoted by Raghunandana in his *Tithitattva*.

(7.) *Kriyāyogasāra* paur. claiming to belong to *Padmapurāṇa*; but really a distinct and independent purāṇa-like work attached, most probably at a later date to the *Padmapurāṇa*; sometimes mentioned as an Upa-purāṇa (e.g. see 1O.i, p. 1229a). See R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, and Om Prakash, *Journal of Ganganath Jha Oriental Research Institute*, XXII, i-iv (1965-66), pp. 151-3.

(8.) *Kriyāyoga* printed in edn. of *Padmapurāṇa* by Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay.

(9.) *Kriyāyoga* printed in edn. of *Padmapurāṇa* by Vaṅgavāsi Press, Calcutta.

(10.) *Kriyāyogasāra* mentioned as not forming part of *Padmapurāṇa* Decca 282a. 1464.

## II

Kriyā-yoga as a subject is dealt in the *Mahābhārata*, *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*, *Agni-purāṇa*, *Matsya-purāṇa*, *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa*, *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, chapters 26-27 of *Skānda-purāṇa*, *Viṣṇudharma* and in several works of Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa literatures, as also in the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patañjali.

The two chapters in the *Vaiṣṇava-khaṇḍa* of *Skānda-purāṇa* are named as *kriyāyogādhikāra-varṇanam* and *kriyāyoge pūjāmaṇḍala-racanā-vidhāna-nirūpaṇam*. In the 67th verse of the 25th chapter it is said: 'For the purpose of *ekānta-dharma* be devoted to *kriyā-yoga*'.[1] Kriyā-yoga has been defined as the process of worship of Vāsudeva.[2] This is elaborated in 101 verses.

*Ekānta-dharma* occupies a special position in Śrī-vaiṣṇavism furthering spiritual growth and elevated station.

An appendix is added to the *Padama-purāṇa*. This appendix has 26 chapters containing 3064 verses. Interlocutors are Jaimini and Vyāsa. You also, O Viprendra! worship Keśava by adopting the process of kriyā-yoga.[3] In the third chapter kriyā-yoga is defined. Jaimini solicits Vyaśa to enlighten him on the aspects of kriyā-yoga. He states both kriyā-yoga and dhyāna-yoga are yoga. The kriyā-yoga is yielding all the desires. By practising dhyāna-yoga exclusively nothing can be achieved.[4] There are then two subdivisions, named kriyā-yoga and dhyāna-yoga. In short kriyā-yoga is "worship of Gaṅgā, Śrī and Viṣṇu, offering gifts, observing Ekādaśī fasts, respect towards Brāhmaṇas, veneration to holy basil and *Emblica Officinalis*, hospitality and reverence to guests". Looking after the parents is also a part of kriyā-yoga.[5] *'Oṃ namo nārāyaṇāya'* is the eight lettered *mantra* and repeating this *mantra* awards all the coveted longings.[6] The theory of grace has superseded the karma theory. Nothing can displace the grace of the Lord.[7] Even a wretched on adoring the Lord shall be freed from all the unrighteousness.

*Bṛhaddharma-purāṇa* 1.25.24 maintains that the *Kriyāyogasāra* is an independent upa-purāṇa. It consists of 26 chapters and all the chapters deal on some specific item of kriyā-yoga and the third chapter comprises eulogistic commendations.

*Bṛhannāradīya-purāṇa* (page 466, verses 13-15) guarantees felicitous prosperity and super mundane achievements heralding efficacy of kriyā-yoga.

*Bhāgavata-purāṇa* XI.27 describes kriyā-yoga. Uddhava entreated the Lord to enlighten him regarding kriyā-yoga. Lord said. "Men can adopt either Vedic, Tantric or mixed course". This is most efficacious in achieving highest felicity. Śrīdhara on introducing this chapter succinctly opines that kriyā-yoga is worship of the Lord.[8] The commentary *Anvitārthaprakāśikā* introduces the term *sāttvata* restricting the process of adoption of kriyā-yoga practice to Sāttvatas only.[9] The term *sāttvata* has not been cogently explained. Another commentator Rādhāramaṇadāsa Gosvāmin states that kriyā-yoga is a way to emancipation by adopting the worship (*arcanā*) the traditional practice of *pūjā*.[10] Another commentator Vīrarāghava calls kriyā-yoga a medium of grace and individual devotion.[11] According to Viśvanātha Cakravartin, another commentator, kriyā-yoga is a type of devotion. This devotion is in the form of worship (*arcanā-bhakti*).[12] This *arcanā-bhakti* is a potent medium and is a theology of infinite details. It is a *karma-kāṇḍa* of special type.

In *Agni-purāṇa* in the chapter on kriyā-yoga under the topic *Yamānuśāsana* it is described.

In *Matsya-purāṇa* 52.12, it is said that kriyā-yoga promotes jñāna-yoga.[13] *Matsya* uses both the terms karma-yoga and kriyā-yoga and may be synonyms. This was first narrated to Manu, son of the Sun, by the Lord.[14] One who pursues kriyā-yoga acquires everything that is covetable either in this world or in the other.[15] Knowledge cannot be obtained without action. Action again is taken to mean yogic exercises. The chapter 258 is named as *devārcānukīrtana* or describing the method of worship of the Lord. It contains 75 verses. On the request of the sages Sūta explains how kriyā-yoga

flourishes for the householders.[16] The third and the fourth quarters are the same as contained in the fifth verse of the fiftysecond chapter.

It is noteworthy that the *Matsya-purāṇa* uses the term *yoga* in both neuter and the masculine genders. In the 258th chapter it is neuter whereas in 52nd chapter it is in masculine gender. The term used in the 258th chapter is in neuter and denotes making idols. But when used in the sense of philosophy as in 258.1 it is masculine. In 258.3 again it is in neuter in the sense of idol making. It is noteworthy that the term *yoga* is used both in masculine and neuter in *Gītā* also. It may signify some technical shade of difference in meaning. *Garuḍa-purāṇa*, 98.9 says: "Brāhmaṇas are commendable and *kriyāparas* deserve greater praise than brāhmaṇas" (*anyebhyo brāhmaṇāḥ śreṣṭhas tebhyaś ca kriyāparāḥ*).

Again kriyā-yoga is dealt with in the *Mahābhārata* in its *Anuśāsana-parvan*. One achieves perfection in knowledge through the operational agency of kriyā-yoga.[17] *Mahābhārata* also sub-divides – 1) dispelling the demerits and 2) accumulating felicity by constant concentration.[18]

In *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* also efficacy of yoga has been described. There is no better means other than yoga for elimination of afflicting demerits.[19] In 6.7.30 an example of magnetic action is given to illustrate the meaning fully. Since yoga removes all the impurities of the soul, it is easily a potent factor in attracting towards the Lord. In 6.7.31 yoga is defined . The mental state blended with the efforts unites with the Brahman.[20] Even in the Yoga it is said: *tattvadarśanopāyaḥ*, yoga is the

instrumentality through which the highest substance can be realized. *Yama, niyama*, etc., which are more or less physical efforts embody mental efforts also in the same category (6.7.31). Pāṇini has also used the term in 1.4.59 meaning verbal action.

In *Viṣṇudharma* kriyā-yoga is dealt in detail. In eight chapters, i.e. 1, 2 and 76-81 it is spoken. The importance of the first chapter is all the more significant since it is quoted at length by Al Beruni in his *Kitabe-Hind*. Almost whole of the first chapter has been translated. It can be confidently presumed that the kriyā-yoga as delineated in the *Viṣṇudharma* was so much popular in the society of his time that he thought it apt and appropriate to include in his book.

> "Marīci said: Having been addressed so, Brahmā explained to the sage the kriyā-yoga for the beneficial advantage of all the men. Adore Hari who is unborn, the Supreme ruler of the world with the support of physical paraphernalia, by sacrifices, worship, prostrations, services day and night, vows and fasts, pleasing Brahmans with all such things that are pleasing to one's own self. Worship Hari by being dedicated to him constantly by concentrating upon Him and engaged in activities only for him (*Viṣṇudharma*. 1.51-54)."

In the chapter 79 once again the topic of kriyā-yoga is raised.

> "In the first instance endeavour on a point which is all blissful and free from pains; if you cannot concentrate try yoga, practise day and night, and if you are unable to attend to it then take to kriyā-yoga, which has been recommended by Brahmā and then devote fully to it (*Viṣṇudharma*, 79.29-33)."

Again in chapter 80 Bali asks:

> " O Grandsire! you had already told me about kriyā-yoga earlier. This I want to listen once again (*Viṣṇu-dharma* 80.1)."

Replying to this, the following six items have been spoken of:

1. Worship of Lord in temple
2. Full concentration while performing worship
3. Elevating of psychic level achieved by this
4. *Tapas* 'austerities'
5. *Brahmacarya* 'celibacy'
6. *Svādhyāya* 'study of religious texts'.[21]

In 80.28 Yama, the Lord of death, prohibits his staff attendants to go near those who are devoted to Keśava since they have no room here in the regions of Yamaloka. "Those who recite the name of Govinda, those who worship Kṛṣṇa with incense, flowers, clothes, ornaments they are not to be disturbed. Those who besmear the floor and clean the temple of Kṛṣṇa are not to be harassed as also their three generations. Please do not cast your evil eye on those who have constructed a temple of Viṣṇu since you administer a commanding

role over the world consisting of the whole mankind and armed with *pāśas*."[22] At this point a distinction between kriyā-yoga and yoga is drawn.[23] Blended together kriyā-yoga and yoga may yield fruits. In *Viṣṇudharma*, 1.12: 'By what means of expediency or hymns or mysterious incantations, magical formulas, adorations, presenting charities, observing fasts, devotional austerities, repeating prayers, sacrificial offerings, He could be pleased, the remover of all the anguishing sufferings".[24] These puzzling questions were answered in 1.51.

In *Kathopaniṣat*, 2.3.18[25] along with *vidyā*, *yoga-vidhi* is also enunciated, i e. yoga-vidhi and vidyā are two different disciplines. But in 2.3.11 the regulating control over the sense organs is also said as yoga.

The first aphorism of the *Sādhana-pāda* of the *Yoga-sūtra* defines kriyā-yoga as comprising of *tapas*, *svādhyāya* and *īśvara-praṇidhāna*,[26] austerities, study of religious texts and concentration on the divine essence. Vācaspati, the renowned commentator, elaborating the meaning of it quotes the conversation between Khāṇḍikya and Keśidhvaja as given in the *Viṣṇu-purāna*, 6.7.33. Further the operative efficacy of the kriyā-yoga is limited to reducing the effect of the *kleśas*. The analogy is the scorched seed which is unable to germinate. Seedness in the seed is there, but its potency to sprout is misspent.

Bhojadeva propounding further says, 'a yogin must practise and pursue kriyā-yoga as a preparatory step towards absolute substantiation of yoga. This assists in performing yoga exercises (not merely physical) of higher order, since *kleśas*[27] originate in Avidyā and practice of yoga shall loosen the grip of Avidyā.

Chiefly *tapas*, *svādhyāya* and *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* amalgamated constitute kriyā-yoga but *yama, niyama* - the constituting components of yoga-aṅga or aggregated enterity'. Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa says on commenting *Yoga-sūtra*, 2.1 that concentration on Īśvara or bhakti-yoga is distinctly mentioned to include it in kriyā-yoga, though *yama-niyama* are also kriyā-yoga. But these three (*tapas*, *svādhyāya* and *Īśvara-praṇidhāna*) are efficient and effective; therefore, separately read[28] and it is easy.[29]

Śaṅkara on BS. 1.1.4 has used the term *kriyā-yoga* and the editor refers to two terms: 1. *saṃhāra-kriyāyoga* and 2. *vṛddhi-kriyāyoga* (Anantakrishna Sastri edn, p. 19, note 5). May be the terms are not used in the technical sense in which employed by yoga or other systems; but it definitely suggests a meaning of action. Thus action is not a spiritual exercise by an individual. Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa, a commentator on *Yogasūtra* has included bhakti-yoga in kriyā-yoga.

*Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha* also deals with kriyā-yoga, but restricts its exposition to the details of Yoga system.

*Bhūṣaṇa* commenting on *Nyāyasāra* also describes kriyā-yoga, but the definition is extended. For example study of Yoga discipline is included in *svādhyāya*, *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* as worship of the Lord by prayers, *japa*, offering flowers or resigning all fruits of the actions performed to the Lord.[30]

Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa has quoted a verse on commenting *Yogasūtra*, 1.1 which says yoga leads to emancipation.[31] Here yoga has been spoken of as a direct cause for

emancipation, a stage of perfect wisdom and knowledge. Are two stages, i.e. *mukti* and *samyak-jñāna* different?

Yoga is considered maintenance of the immobility of the senses. Mind is also taken to be an organ; thereby any mental activity is also included in yoga. Śaṅkara commenting on *Kaṭha.* 3.10 has given meaning of *manas* or mind.[32] The process of thinking is rooted in the mind. The sense organs work in the presence of sense objects. It can be a physical activity or even mental. *Saṃkalpa* and *vikalpa* are also thought processes. *Saṃkalpa* is a notion formed in the mind after the sense organs have contacted the sense objects. *Vikalpa* is hesitating irresolution formed and unformed. Any thought either in the forming stage or in the stage of dissolving is an act. If an idea can be conceived in any possible form of existence it can be mental activity. Concepts make it possible for the mind to achieve a cognitive purpose and organize the thoughts and the thought process always strays into new methods and new resolves. Mind brings thought and its object into a concrete relationship. *Kaṭha* says when this relationship is not externalized and is restricted to mental status only that position may be the highest.[33]

Vaikhānasa system has enumerated four ways for the attainment of the supreme goal. All these are paths of *pūjā* 'worship'. They are *caryā*, *kriyā*, *jñāna* and *yoga*. Worship is *caryā*, installations of idols is *kriyā*, knowing the self is *jñāna* and purification of the body is *yoga*. The difference can be noticed. In other systems yoga is a direct cause for emancipation. Most of the Indian systems accept the efficacy of Yoga as a discipline in elevation of the spiritual status and in contrast to this generally accepted view of the Indian philosophy,

Vaikhānasa restricts to bodily equipment or a cosmetic refinement.

Yoga is eulogized profusely. *Dakṣa-smṛti* states: 'The country wherein a yogin resides, or even one who is expert in yoga that country shall be righteous land and all his relations shall also be devout and pious'.[34]

*Gītā* speaks of an old tradition of yoga being lost and what Lord Kṛṣṇa preached to Arjuna was this ancient tradition of yoga which is now lost.[35] Again in *Gītā* in chapters VI, verses 16, 17, 23, 33 and 36 yoga is referred. Even in *Bhāgavata* it is recognized.[36] Basic definitions have not been modified. Patañjali is not the author of yoga but only an editor. Therefore it has to be accepted that yoga in Indian spiritual disciplines is old and it has facets of varied hues. Gautama before becoming the Buddha had also practised yoga and subsequently elevated himself to Buddhahood. Evan today yoga occupies a prominent place in Buddhist religion.

Yoga is one of the disciplines that is uniformly and unanimously accepted by quarreling systems as a very effective method assisting spiritual growth. Outwardly galloping sense organs are difficult to be controlled. Any further progress in spiritual path is possible only by him who can control fully and perfectly the area of working of all the organs including mental faculties which propose and dispose the secondary stage of information received through the sense organs. This functioning is coloured and biased. Therefore, the final decisive concept is defective. Concepts thus formed are leading to tertiary activity which result in harming the right basis of thinking and thought forming.

There sprang up many schools of yoga.[37] The earliest references are found in *Maitrāyaṇī, Kaṭha* and *Śvetāśvatara upaniṣads* and all the three belong the Black-Yajurveda branch. The yoga practices are suggested to be related to Sāṃkhya though the term *sāṃkhya* used here may not necessarily be the Sāṃkhya philosophy as is popularly known today. The term *sāṃkhya* is used in the sense of wisdom or spiritual knowledge in earlier literature.

Śaṅkara in his introduction to the *Śvetāśvatara* says that the self-realization is effected by action taken for the purpose and towards pleasing the Lord and these actions in their turn result in cessation of the mundane bindings.[38]

Vaikhānasa system maintains meeting of the individual self with the god to be yoga.[39] The nature of this meeting is not exact. Possibly the stage wherein the individual self and the universal self meet is a situation where it is free from the mundane forces - the objects, the qualities, etc. In some Vaiṣṇava schools the soul and the god are taken as two separate categories because of the proximity, the self acquires the divine aura or aroma and the individual soul graduates itself to a divine stage of the *sārūpya*-class, and does not identify as in the Advaita School. At this stage the individual soul is segregated from the worldly snares.

*Viṣṇusahasranāma* also reads *yoga* and *yogavidāṃ netā* as two names of the Lord. Each chapter of the *Gītā* is stated to be a yoga and in conforming at the final end the whole of the *Gītā* is called *yoga*[40] and Kṛṣṇa is attributed as *yogeśvara*.[41] Śaṅkara commenting the term *yoga* in the *Viṣṇusahasranāma* 16 elucidates the

name *yoga*. Since the God can be achieved or discovered through this process of yoga, this name *yoga*.[42]

The *Kūrma-purāṇa* calls the Lord as *yogātmā*.[43] *Kūrma-purāṇa* enunciates a stage categorized as mahā-yoga when the psychosis is fixed to only one item to the exclusion of all other things.[44]

Mantra-yoga, Laya-yoga, Haṭha-yoga and Rāja-yoga are the established schools from the ancient times. Subsequently many upaniṣads came into existence like *Śāṇḍilya*, *Dhyānabindu*, *Haṃsa*, *Amṛtanāda*, *Varāha*, *Maṇḍala*, *Nādabindu*, *Yogakuṇḍali*, *Tejobindu*, etc. Adyar has published a bunch of Yoga upaniṣads along with the commentary of Brahmendrayogin.

*Tejobindu-upaniṣad* has given 15 items called *pañca-daśāṅga-yoga* which includes topics such as *yama*, *niyama*, *tyāga*, *dṛk*, *sthiti*, *prāṇasaṃyamana*, *pratyā-hāra*, *dhāraṇa*, *mauna*, *ekānta*, *āsana*, etc.

*Maitrāyaṇi-upaniṣad*[45] has advocated six parts of yoga, namely *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇa*, *tarka* and *samādhi*. *Yoga-sūtra* 2.9 recounts *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇa* and *dhyāna*. *Yama*, *niyama*, *āsana* and *tarka* are conspicuously distinct items.

*Manu-smṛti* also reads *prāṇāyāma*, *dhāraṇa*, *pratyā-hāra* and *dhyāna*.[46] In VI.74 the term *samyak-darśana* is also used. *Gītā* also uses the term *samyak*.[47] Is this term made current and popularized by the Buddhists? It is strange that *Manu-smṛti*, VI.72 and *Bhāgavata*, III.28.11 are identical. Sabīja-yoga or 'yoga with seed' is described in the 28th chapter and bhakti-yoga in the

29th chapter of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, 3rd *skandha*. *Bhāgavata*, III.29.35 classes bhakti-yoga and yoga as two distinct categories.[48]

*Gītā*, VI.46 also states "the *yogin* is greater than the ascetic and he is considered to be greater than the *jñānin*. The wise who is superior to an action-prone man. Therefore, O Arjuna! become *yogin*".[49] *Bhāṣyotkarṣa-dīpikā*, a commentary on *Gītā* explains the term *yoga* as *dhyāna-yoga* 'yoga of concentration'.[50]

The yoga as practised in the Buddhist religion is called *aṣṭāṅga-mārga* or eight-fold path and this contains three classes: a) *jñāna*, b) *śīla* and c) *samādhi*. *Jñāna* includes *samyak-dṛṣṭi* and *samyak-saṃkalpa*. *Śīla* constitutes *samyak-karma*, *samyak-jīvikā* and *samyak-vacana*. *Samādhi* includes *samyak-smṛiti*, *samyak-prayatna* and *samyak-samādhi*.

The *Sarvadarśana-saṃgraha* also explains kriyā-yoga.[51] On coming to Rāmānuja he says concentration on the God is yoga. So the term *kriyāyoga* as adopted by Nārada-pāñcarātrins has come to mean something which is neither originated in the Yoga system nor adopted by other systems of religion or philosophy.

*Mahābhārata* speaks of two types of kriyā-yoga. They are *jñāna-siddhi* and *karma-yajña*.[52]

In the *Kriyādhikāra* of Bhṛgu, the 35th chapter named *Kriyāyoga-phalaśruti-kathanam* contains 603 verses. Probably what *Viṣṇudharma* has said in 105 chapters has been said here in these 603 verses. This has no relation with kriyā-yoga as enunciated by Patañjali.

Only *īśvarapraṇidhāna* can remotely be said to be related. *Śrīpraśna-saṃhitā* speaks of a system of *Karma-sāṃkhya*,[53] and *Ānanda-saṃhitā* of Marīci speaks of *Vaiṣṇava-yoga*.[54]

Kriyā-yoga, then, is a sacred observance, a solemn engagement, a mystery, creation and dissolution, a bodily exercise as Haṭha-yoga, etc., a mental operation, a verbal action, concentration on God, etc. meaning action of any type particularly religious in different facets, either by body, mind or even soul if soul can act or react.

## REFERENCES


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   *Skānda-purāṇa, Vaiṣṇava-khaṇḍa*, 25.67.
2. पूजाविधिः क्रियायोगो वासुदेवस्य कीर्त्यते। ibid. 26.4.
3. तस्मात्त्वमपि विप्रेन्द्र क्रियायोगेन केशवम्।
   समाराध्य सदा भक्त्या व्रज विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥
   *Padma-purāṇa - Kriyāyogasāra*, 2.39.
4. क्रियायोगस्य तत्त्वं मे ब्रूहि व्यास महामते।
   क्रियायोगमहं ज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवतो मुखात्॥ १ ॥
   क्रियायोगध्यानयोगावुभौ योगौ प्रकीर्तितौ।
   तयोराद्यः क्रियायोगः कुर्वतां सर्वकामदः॥ ३ ॥
   गङ्गाश्रीविष्णुपूजा च दानानि द्विजसत्तम।
   ब्राह्मणानां तथा भक्तिर्भक्तिरेकादशीव्रते॥ ४ ॥
   धात्री तुलस्योर्भक्तिश्च तथा चातिथिपूजनम्।
   क्रियायोगाङ्गभूतानि प्रोक्तानीति समासतः॥ ५ ॥
   क्रियायोगादृते विप्र ध्यानयोगान्न सिध्यति॥ ६ ॥ ibid. III.
5. प्रत्यक्षदेवौ पितरौ सेवन्ते ये त्वहर्निशम्।
   सर्वसिद्धिः भवेत्तेषां प्रसादाज्जगतीपतेः॥ ibid. III.85.
6. नारायणेति मन्नाम कदाचिद्यः स्मरेन्नरः।
   साधयाम्यखिलं तस्य पितुः पुत्र इवेप्सितम्॥ *Kriyāyogasāra*, 10.64.
7. यस्य तुष्टोऽस्म्यहं विप्र स पापात्मापि मुक्तिभाक्। ibid. 19.82.
8. Introductory verses by the commentator Śrīdhara on *Bhāgavata*, XI. chapter 27:

सप्तविंशे क्रियायोगः सद्यः चित्तप्रसादकः।
सर्वकामाप्तिहेतुश्च साङ्गः प्रोक्तः समासतः॥ १ ॥
रागाद्याकुलचित्तानां कुतोऽसर्गादिसम्भवः।
इति कृष्णार्चनं भद्रमनुस्मृत्यानुपृच्छति॥ २ ॥
क्रियायोगमिति भगवदाराधनरूपम्।

9. हे प्रभो ! यस्मात् यं क्रियायोगम् आश्रित्य ये सात्त्वताः भक्ताः भक्तपालकं त्वां यथा येन प्रकारेणेति अर्चन्ति तं भगवदाराधनरूपं क्रियायोगं समाचक्ष्व।
10. क्रियायोग अर्चनलक्षणो मोक्षोपायः साङ्गः परोद्देशप्रवृत्तिकृतिसाध्यं परार्थापरपर्यायभङ्गः तत्सहितः संक्षेपतः क्रियानिमित्तत्वस्य लक्षणस्य धर्मस्य सर्वकारकाणां सम्बन्धेऽ विशिष्टत्वात्।
11. मत्पराः श्रद्धधानश्च भक्तिं विन्दतीति स्वाराधनात्मकक्रियायोगस्य भक्तियोगानुग्राहकत्वमुक्तम्।
12. क्रियायोगाभिधा भक्तिः सप्तविंशेऽर्चनात्मिका नानोपचारैरर्चायां स्वधर्मसहितोच्यते। अर्चनभक्तिः। मदर्चनलक्षणस्य कर्मकाण्डविशेषस्य नास्त्यन्तःशास्त्रतः पारं चानुष्ठानतोऽपि।
13. अयमेव क्रियायोगो ज्ञानयोगस्य साधकः, Matsya. 52.11.
14. कथयामास विश्वात्मा मनवे सूर्यसूनवे।
कर्मयोगं च साख्यं च यथावद्विस्तरान्वितम्॥ Matsya. 52.3.
15. इति क्रियायोगपरायणस्य वेदान्तशास्त्रस्मृतिवत्सलस्य विकर्मभीतस्य सदा न किञ्चित् प्राप्तव्यमस्तीह परे च लोके। ibid. 52.26.
16. क्रियायोगः कथं सिद्ध्येत् गृहस्थादिषु सर्वदा।
ज्ञानयोगसहस्राद्धि कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते॥ ibid. 258.1.
17. ज्ञानसिद्धिं क्रियायोगैः सेव्यमानश्च योगिभिः।
ऋषिगन्धर्वसिद्धैश्च विहितं करणं परम्॥
कर्मयज्ञक्रियायोगैः सेव्यमानः सुरासुरैः।
नित्यं कर्मफलैर्हीनं तमहं कारणं वदे॥ *Anuśāsana-parva*, 14.99.
18. तदा तत्प्रतीकाराच्च सततं चाविचिन्तनात्।
आधिव्याधिप्रशमनं क्रियायोगद्वयेन तु॥ Vana. 2.23.
19. क्लेशानां क्षयकरं योगादन्यन्न विद्यते। *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*, 6.7.25.
20. आत्मप्रयत्नसापेक्षा विशिष्टा या मनोगतिः।
तस्या ब्रह्मणि संयोगो योग इत्यभिधीयते॥ ibid. 6.7.31.
21. देवतार्चा देवतागारे तन्मयत्वेन पूजनम्।
यथावच्चेतसः भूमिं करोति नियतो हि सः॥
तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण पुण्यस्वाध्यायसंस्तवैः।
क्रियायोगः स विद्वद्भिः योगिनां समुदाहृतः॥ *Viṣṇudharma*. 80.2-3.
22. ibid. 80.30-36.
23. प्रधानं कारणं योगः विमुक्तेर्दैतिजेश्वर।
क्रियायोगश्च यौगश्च परमं तात साधनम्॥ ibid. 80.15.

24. केनोपायेन मन्त्रैर्वा रहस्यैः परिचर्यया।
दानैर्व्रतोपवासैर्वा जप्यैर्होमैरथापि वा॥ ibid. 1.12.
25. विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम्, 2.3.18.
26. तपः स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः।
27. *Kleśas* are *avidyā*, *asmitā*, *rāga*, *dveṣa* and *abhiniveśa*. *Abhiniveśa* is dread of death.
28. ईश्वरप्रणिधानरूपो भक्तियोगोऽप्यत्र क्रियायोगमध्ये एव प्रवेशितः। यद्यपि यमादयोऽपि क्रियायोगस्तथाप्येतत्त्रयेण केवलेनापि तीव्रतरेण योगसिद्ध्यास्य प्रकृष्टत्वात् पृथङ्निर्देशः Nagoji Bhaṭṭa on *Yogasūtra*, 2.1.
29. एवं चातितीव्राभ्यासनैरपेक्ष्येणायं श्रेष्ठः, ibid. 1.23.
30. प्रशान्तमन्त्रेश्वरवाचिनोऽभ्यासः स्वाध्यायः। क्षुद्रसिद्धिहेतुरपि ईश्वरवाची मन्त्रोऽस्तीति तत्प्रतिषेधार्थं प्रशान्तग्रहणम्। परमात्मैकनिष्ठेन भवितव्यम् । ज्ञानार्थमीश्वरग्रहणम्। योगशास्त्रार्थाभ्यासो वा स्वाध्याय इति। परमेश्वरतत्त्वस्य भक्त्यतिशयात् प्रबन्धेनानुचिन्तनं पर्यालोचनमीश्वरप्रणिधानं स्तुतिजपपुष्पादिभिराराधनं वा। सर्वक्रियाणां परमगुरावर्पणं वा। तद्वाचकस्य प्रणवस्य जपस्तदर्थभावनं चेति। सेयं तपः स्वाध्यायादिलक्षणक्रियायोगहेतुत्वाद योग इत्युच्यते । स च क्रियायोगः संसेव्यमानः समाधिं भावयति क्लेशांश्च तनूकरोति।, *Bhūṣaṇa* com. on *Nyāyasāra*, p. 586.
31. मुक्तिर्योगात्तथायोगात्सम्यग्ज्ञानं महीपते quoted in introducing *Yogasūtra*, 1.1 by Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa.
32. मनःशब्दवाच्यं मनस आरम्भकं भूतसूक्ष्मं संकल्पविकल्पाद्यारम्भकत्वात्।
विकल्पः is विगतः कल्पः or विशिष्टः कल्पः।
33. यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति तामाहुः परमां गतिम्॥ Kaṭh. 2.3.10.
34. यस्मिन् देशे वसेद्योगी ध्यायी योगविचक्षणः।
सोऽपि देशो भवेत्पूतो किं पुनस्तस्य बान्धवाः॥ *Dakṣa-smṛti*, 7.45.
35. स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप। *Gītā*, 4.2.
स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः। *Gītā*, 4.3.
36. एष आत्मपथोऽव्यक्तो नष्टः कालेन भूयसा। *Bhāgavata*, 3.25.37.
37. हठं विना राजयोगो राजयोगं विना हठः।
न सिद्ध्यति द्वयं तस्मादानिष्पत्तेः समभ्यसेत्॥
38. ईश्वरार्थकमनुष्ठानेन अपगतरागादिमलोऽनित्यादिदर्शनेनोत्पन्नेहामुत्रार्थभोगविरागं .. ..
... अयं तु परमो धर्मो यद्योगेनात्मदर्शनम् ... ... ...।
जन्मान्तरसहस्रेषु यदा क्षीणास्तु किल्बिषाः।
तदा पश्यन्ति योगेन संसारोच्छेदनं महत्॥ Śaṅkara on Śvetāśvatara.
39. जीवात्मपरमात्मनोर्योगो योग इत्यामनन्ति। Marīci: *Vimānārcanakalpa* p. 510.
40. योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम्। *Gītā*, 18.75.

41. यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णः, ibid. 18.78.
42. ज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि सर्वाणि निरुध्य मनसा सह।
एकत्वभावना योगः क्षेत्रज्ञपरमात्मनोः॥
तदवाप्यतया योगः।
Quoted in *Viṣṇusahasranāma* 16.
43. स वासुदेवो विश्वात्मा योगात्मा पुरुषोत्तमः।
44. यत्र पश्यति चात्मानं नित्यानन्दं निरञ्जनम्।
मामेकं स महायोगी भाषितः परमेश्वरः॥
quoted by Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa on *Yogasūtra*, 1.17.
45. प्राणायामः प्रत्याहारः ध्यानं धारणा तर्कः समाधिः
षडङ्गः उच्यते योगः। Maitrāyaṇi. 6.8.
46. प्राणायामैर्दहेद्दोषान्धारणाभिश्च किल्बिषम्।
प्रत्याहारेण संसर्गान्ध्यानेनानीश्वरान् गुणान्॥ Manu. VI.72.
This is same as *Bhāgavata*, 3.28.11.
47. *Gītā*, 5.4, 8.10, 9.30. etc.
48. भक्तियोगश्च योगश्च मया मानव्युदीरितः।
ययोरेकतरेणैव पुरुषः पुरुषं व्रजेत्॥ *Bhāgavata*, III.29.35.
49. तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः।
कर्मिभिश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन॥ *Gītā*, VI.46.
50. योगी अत्र ध्यानयोगी विवक्षितः पूर्वोत्तरग्रन्थानुरोधात्। ध्यानयोगस्यैवोपसंहार्यत्वाच्च। *Bhāṣyotkarṣadīpikā* on *Gītā*, VI.46; and
उच्यावचेषु भूतेषु दुर्ज्ञेयामकृतात्मभिः।
ध्यानयोगेन संपश्येदगतिमस्यान्तरात्मनः॥ *Manu-smṛti*, VI.73.
51. देवतानुसन्धानं थोगः इति रामानुजीयाः नारदपाञ्चरात्रविदः आहुः। ... तदुपासनञ्च पञ्चविधमभिगमनमुपादानमिज्यास्वाध्यायो योग इति। *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*, p. 117 (BORI) .
52. तदा तत्प्रतिकाराच्य सततं च विचिन्तनात्।
आधिव्याधिप्रशमनं क्रियायोगद्वयेन तु॥ Vana. 2.23.
and
ज्ञानसिद्धिक्रियायोगैः सेव्यमानश्च योगिभिः।
ऋषिगन्धर्वसिद्धैश्च विहितं कारणं परम्॥
कर्मयज्ञक्रियायोगैः सेवमानः सुरासुरैः।
नित्यं कर्मफलैर्हीनं तमहं कारणं वदे॥ Anu. 14.99.
53. कर्मसांख्यादयः शास्त्रैः उपायत्वेन दर्शिताः। 53.57.
54. इत्याज्ञप्तोऽस्मि शूद्रश्च वैष्णवं योगमभ्यसेत्। एकजातेरयं धर्मो विष्णुयोग इतीरितः। 12.26, p. 148.

# TEXTS AND STUDIES

# THE RĀMĀYANA

## *A SACRED POEM OF VĀLMĪKI*

by

**M.V. RAMA SARMA**

ORIENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
**SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY**
**TIRUPATI - 517502**

# PREFACE

Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* like Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* belongs to sacred literature. The three poet-prophets visualize divine providence in terms of human experience and insist on unswerving loyalty to God.

In the *Rāmāyaṇa* Vālmīki presents Rāma mostly as a human being, but of a transcendent nature. The two central characters in the epic, Rāma and Sītā are portrayed as exemplars of domestic virtues. Rāma with his adherence to *dharma*, Sītā with her essential purity symbolize all that is best in humanity. In the epic Vālmīki shows Rāma as a dutiful son, an ideal husband, brother, friend, protector and king. Unlike Kṛṣṇa who preaches, Rāma actively participates in every aspect of life and becomes a source of emulation for succeeding generations. In revealing human Rāma as divine, Vālmīki describes the indescribable.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is a sacred poem with its ethical idealism and divine revelation. The epic is of universal appeal and it is relevant to every age as a *dharma-śāstra* and as a compendium of moral values. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is not of an age, but of all ages.

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*M.V. Rama Sarma*

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# CHAPTER I

# THE RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE EPIC TRADITION

Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* has an auspicious, imaginative beginning. On one occasion when the sage Nārada visits Vālmīki's hermitage. Vālmīki asks him, 'Tell me, O saint! who is at present the most accomplished, learned, powerful, noble minded, truthful, firm in vows, of excellent character and of grateful turn of mind'. Nārada cognizant of the three worlds cheerfully says that the person answering to that description is the famous king Rāma of Ikṣvāku dynasty. Nārada adds that Rāma is noble, generous, upright, 'deeply versed in *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*'. He is highly skilled in archery, compassionate and valiant. Nārada then narrates the eventful life of Rāma, and Vālmīki's mind is given to contemplative thinking. Later he goes with his disciples to the river Tamasā and sees there two birds sporting happily. Suddenly he finds the male bird killed by a hunter and the female bird hovering about in agony. On seeing the pitiable state of the forlorn bird Vālmīki utters some words overwhelmed with grief. Peculiarly these words uttered in a spontaneous fashion figure with equal feet and measure, capable of being sung in accompaniment to a stringed lyre. As these lines express grief they have acquired the name *śloka* and this becomes the forerunner of verse writing in Sanskrit. Vālmīki thus becomes *ādikavi* 'first poet' in Sanskrit.

Brahmā, the creator of the Universe, realizing Vālmīki's poetic talent, appears before him and tells him that he has to celebrate the life of Rāma, as narrated by Nārada. He blesses Vālmīki by stating, 'So long as the mountains and the seas exist on earth, the sacred history of the *Rāmāyaṇa* shall endure'. Vālmīki describes the deeds of Rāma in thousands of melodious verses. The *Rāmāyaṇa* deals with the glorious sons of Ikṣvāku who ruled over India for countless years from the days of Manu. Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* elaborately discusses the various aspects of *dharma*, like *rāja-dharma*, *kṣatriya-dharma*, and *gṛhaṣṭha-dharma*.

The two Indian epics - the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* - and Milton's *Paradise Lost* with their thematic content, and insistence on man's willing submission to God's will, can rightly be called sacred poetry. In these three poems God functions as a speaking character. A sacred poem, 'not only enshrines certain ethical values, but becomes the source of virtue in the succeeding ages'.[1] This is true of the three epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and *Paradise Lost*. Especially in the two epics, the *Mahābhārata* and *Paradise Lost* God reveals himself as God, whereas in the *Rāmāyaṇa* Rāma's divinity is given to us only in the last section of the epic. Rāma acts mostly like a human being for Rāvaṇa can be killed only by a man. Neither Gods, nor Gandharvas, nor any of those superior beings can kill him. That is the boon he acquires from Brahmā. Some anthropomorphic form becomes necessary in any poem where God is introduced, for he has to accommodate himself to the level of human understanding.[2] So these three epics, as sacred poetry, reveal to us the reasonableness of God's actions and the justice involved in them, though we may often wonder 'what the unsearchable dispose of highest

wisdom brings about'. These three epics demonstrate the fundamental axiom that 'suffering for Truth's sake' is fortitude of the highest kind.

Like the two Greek epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the two Indian epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* come from a heroic age when man's militant heroism was glorified. But unlike the Greek epics, the two Indian epics reflect ethical idealism and moral sensitiveness. Homer describes warfare in the *Iliad*, quite realistically but with absolute moral indifference. He does not indicate whether the Greeks are right or the Trojans are truthful. Even the gods and goddesses, presented in the *Iliad*, fail to reveal their transcendence. They seem to be petty minded and whimsical in their attitude towards men and women.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, even though they are authentic epics, reflect a highly refined cultural background often found in the literary epics. The conflict of virtue and vice, of good and evil, is clearly reflected in the Indian epics. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* Rāma is symbolic of everything virtuous and Rāvaṇa displays evil propensities. No doubt Rāvaṇa is great as a warrior, but not good in his relationship with others. Rāma is both great and good. Similarly in the *Mahābhārata* the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas symbolize good and evil in a marked fashion. On the whole the Indian epics uphold the truth: *yato dharmas tato jayaḥ* 'where there is virtue, there is victory'. Such an ethical background is not to be found in Homer's *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*.

In general all epic poetry is the same whether it comes from the east or the west, from the north or the south. Its blood and temper are the same. It is

'a narrative dealing with great actions and great characters in a style commensurate with the lordliness of the theme which tends to idealize these characters and actions and to sustain and to embellish its subject by means of episode and amplification'.[3]

Epic poetry is classified into two categories, the authentic and the literary. The authentic epics are oral, and the literary epics are written. Authentic epics have an audience before them and often they may be a collection of all the lays and floating material available at that time. So the authentic epics reveal more of emotional fervency, whereas the literary epics reflect cool, calculated thought. The literary epic is written by a single author, whereas the authentic epic may often be the production of a single writer or a number of writers working together. Much of the spontaneity in the authentic epics compensates for their otherwise loose structure.

A poem meant for hearing naturally will have several episodes and each episode can be a poem by itself. In the *Mahābhārata* the stories of Rāma, of Sāvitrī and of several other past historic persons figure. It is generally said that what is not found in the *Mahābhārata* is not to be found in the land of the Bhāratas. It is encyclopaedic relating all the episodes of the past. In *Beowulf*, the old English epic, there are two episodes - the slaying of Grendel and his mother, and the killing of the Firedrakes. These two episodes can be treated as independent poems altogether. The same is true of Homer's epics. In almost all the authentic epics structural unity may be missing. But in a literary epic like *Paradise Lost* we find the two episodes dovetailed into the main narrative. The *Rāmāyaṇa*, on the whole, has

a cogent structure and resembles a literary epic in this aspect.

As regards the machinery of the epics, in both the epics, the authentic and the literary, there is the supernatural element, the intervention of gods. In *Beowulf* reference is always made to the *Wyrd*. Virgil follows the same convention as Homer, but in Virgil's *Aeneid* gods are not so whimsical as in Homer's *Iliad*. Tasso in his *Gerusalemme Liberata* introduces angels who happen to be ministers of help. His God answers prayers. Milton's God is a hard task master, pitilessly stern to the disobedient. Kṛṣṇa takes a prominent role in the *Mahābhārata*. Rāma offers help to all those who seek his protection. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is often called the poem of *śaraṇāgati*. Rāma is a benevolent lord even though he has to kill many Rākṣasas who torture the *ṛṣis* and ruin their sacrifices. Rāma is the lord of *dharma*.

Almost all the authentic epics display a spirit of heroism, mostly of a militant type. Beowulf says:

> The end of this mortal span
> Must we all await, so let each man win
> all the fame he can
> Ere cometh his death.

Most of the central figures in the authentic epics long for renown on the battlefield. Homer's *Iliad* with Hector, Achilles and several other heroic spirits gives us an idea of the old world of chivalry and gallantry. The two Indian epics describe warfare. Rāma's glorious fight with Rāvaṇa in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the Kuru-Pāṇḍava war in the *Mahābhārata* give us a brave world of undaunted courage. But these wars are fought for a noble cause, for establishing righteousness and for subduing evil forces

in the world. In this respect the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* slightly differ from Homer's *Iliad* even though they are equally heroic. Warfare figures in all these three epics. In the literary epics heroic spirit is seen to be of heroism that consists in the purification of one's own self and in surrendering to the will of gods. Tasso in his *Gerusalemme* shows his solemn aspirations for Christian heroism. Milton's Adam has to face the bitter odds of life with faith in himself and faith in God. In a way the writers of the literacy epics 'are almost forced to point a moral. Their heroes are examples of what men ought to be or types of human destiny whose very mistakes must be marked and remembered'.[4]

There is a didactic tone in the literary epics. Virgil's Aeneas, Milton's Adam are by no means infallible. They commit mistakes thereby putting themselves to trouble. Their very mistakes and achievements indicate to us what we may accept and disregard in life. The Indian epics reflect through Rāma and Yudhiṣṭhira the need for maintaining *dharma* at all levels. The epics read like *dharma-śāstras* ennobling mankind through their lofty idealism and moral elevation. Kṛṣṇa's dynamic role in the *Mahābhārata* is another striking feature of the epic.

On the whole it may be said that we cannot summarily classify epic poetry as authentic and literary. Whether it is authentic or literary, an epic 'is a long narrative or a great and serious subject, related in an elevated style, and centred on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race'.[5] In their ethical idealism, rich poetic imagination, vivid characterization and descriptive accounts of warfare, both the *Rāmāyaṇa* and

the *Mahābhārata* deservedly figure in the world of epic poetry.

Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* has six cantos or *kāṇḍas*, of which the first canto, *Bāla-kāṇḍa* is intermixed with interpolations and additions. So the epic is supposed to be Vālmīki's production completely from canto 2 to canto 6. Canto 2, *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* is full of moving domestic scenes. Daśaratha wants to have his first son Rāma declared as heir-apparent to the throne. Everything is planned in a grand manner, but all expectations crumble when Kaikeyī, the third queen, demands the two boons promised to her by Daśaratha on a prior occasion to be fulfilled. So Rāma is obliged to go into the forests for fourteen years and Bharata, Kaikeyī's son has to be the heir-apparent. Scenes of tenderness, grief and desolation experienced by Daśaratha and the people of Ayodhyā are described vividly.

Bhārata on his return from his uncle's place condemns his mother and starts for the Citrakūṭa forest with the three queens, people of Ayodhyā and the priests, hoping to convince Rāma to come back and accept his responsibility as a ruler. But Rāma is unmoved. Rāma is loved by all and he is the embodiment of *dharma*. Suffering for truth's sake has greater significance for him than kingship. He wants to uphold the promise of his father to Kaikeyī. Nothing can deter him from his duty.

In the *Araṇya-kāṇḍa* Rāma is shown as a warrior. Sītā like Eve is deceived. She takes a fancy for the golden deer. Rāvaṇa in the guise of a hermit carries her away in the absence of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. This is the only scene where Sītā is unreasonable in her attitude

towards Lakṣmaṇa. Rāma's association with Sugrīva, Hanumān and other *vānaras* is given in the *Kiṣkindhā-kāṇḍa*. Rāma's slaying of Vālin is the only situation that puzzles us. But Vālmīki himself offers a plausible explanation through Rāma, and Vālin regrets for his attack of Rāma. Aṅgada, the son of Vālin is made the heir-apparent to the throne.

The *Sundara-kāṇḍa*, often considered to be the most religious one, refers to Hanumān's success in finding out Sītā in the Aśoka forest and he carries signs of recognition from her to Rāma. The *Yudha-kāṇḍa*, the final one, describes warfare between Rāma and Rāvaṇa and the defeat of Rāvaṇa. Even before the war Vibhīṣaṇa, the brother of Rāvaṇa, surrenders to Rāma. Though Sugrīva first hesitates to have the company of Vibhīṣaṇa, Rāma, the noble lord, takes Vibhīṣaṇa under his protection.

Vālmīki sums up his epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, with a reference to Rāma-rājya showing Rāma as an illustrious ideal king. The characters of Rāma and Sītā are portrayed by Vālmīki in the most human form as the noblest exemplars of mankind. Womanly love, essential purity, inviolable chastity and unquestioned loyalty to Rāma endear Sītā to the rich and the poor alike. Womanly grace, beauty, intellect and all other refinements in Sītā make her the ideal woman. In fact the tale of Sītā 'was a tale of womanly faith and abnegation which claimed and fascinated the Hindu world'.[6] Rāma is equally loved, admired, venerated and idolized by all. Vālmīki chooses to close the epic with a benediction. 'If anybody reads or adores the old history (of Rāma) he or she will be absolved from all sins and will enjoy longevity'. The immortal epic endorses the conventional

blessing: *sarve janāḥ sukhino bhavantu* 'may all people be happy'.

The *Uttara-kāṇḍa* in all likelihood is a later addition written by some other poet or poets (other than Vālmīki) and it is an unnecessary intrusion into the main epic. Vālmīki's epic is over with reference to Rāma-rājya as a blessing to the people by the ideal king Rāma. Like the *Harivaṃśa*, it is reasonable to treat the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* as a poem by itself. Peculiarly enough, half of the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* relates to Rāvaṇa's heroic exploits and romantic excesses. Only a part of the *kāṇḍa* is concerned with Rāma, and that too not in a respectable manner. In the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* we find Rāma abandoning Sītā to her fate especially when she is expecting a child. This does not speak well of Rāma who has been kind to all, even to Rāvaṇa on the battlefield. Rāma hearing some unpleasant comment about Sītā's stay in Laṅkā for a year, decides to send her away in a surreptitious manner. On the pretext of sending her to see hermitages again, as a wish fulfilment of Sītā, he tells Lakṣmaṇa to leave her in the forest. Lakṣmaṇa who has nothing but adoration for Sītā is obliged to play this hoax and Sītā is abandoned by Rāma cruelly. Rāma tries to justify his position like an ordinary human being by telling Lakṣmaṇa, 'Everybody hates ill-fame and worships fame. Every noble man aspires for fame. Not to speak of Sītā I can even give up my life for fear of infamy .... So my brother, take Sītā tomorrow morning in the chariot drawn by Sumantra and leave her in some other country'.

This sounds unkind and uncharitable of Rāma especially when in the previous *kāṇḍa* Agni brings Sītā from fire unpolluted and Brahmā tells him that she

is Lakṣmī, Rāma, in this context, behaves no better than the Elizabethan jealous husbands like Othello and Leontes who unnecessarily suspect and harass their pure women, Desdemona and Hermione. Apparently the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* belittles Rāma and he suffers in contrast with Rāvaṇa. Presumably the late acceptance of Rāma cult with the first temple built for him by a Chola king in the tenth century, seems to be due to this negative picture of Rāma in the *Uttara-kāṇḍa*. So to be fair to Vālmīki and his characterization of Rāma as the symbol of ideal kingship and ethical purpose, and as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu we have to treat *Uttara-kāṇḍa* as a separate poem, in no way connected with Vālmīki's epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

In a similar manner we may ignore the contention that the *Rāmāyaṇa* is a nature myth where 'the whole story is clearly the account of how the full moon waxes and finally disappears from sight during the last fortnight, fourteen days of the lunar month which are the fourteen years of Rāma and Sītā's exile'.[7] However, fascinating the theory may be of the approximation of fourteen days and fourteen years, it has no validity at all, for the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* is a realistic account of Rāma, and Indian tradition in general, has accepted that Rāma did belong to an ancient Indian dynasty. Vālmīki regards Rāma 'as a historical figure in a sense'.[8] So the *Rāmāyaṇa* is no myth at all.

Nor is it feasible to accept the *Rāmāyaṇa* as an allegory indicating the Aryanization of the South. This looks fantastic for 'never an epic so full of traditions and historical memories, so intimately connected with the life of the people, as the *Rāmāyaṇa*'[9] can be an allegory. Rāma is generous to Vibhīṣaṇa and Sugrīva by

making them rulers of their own lands. In a way Rāma's association with the South is the prelude to a national spirit in India and Rāma is the first grand king of the Indian nation.

## REFERENCES

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3. Dixon, *Epic and Heroic Poetry*, p. 24.
4. C.M. Bowra, *From Virgil to Milton*, p. 161.
5. M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, p. 49.
6. R.C. Dutt, *The Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata* translated into English, Epilogue, p. 160.
7. John Campbell Oman, *The Great Indian Epics*, p. 92.
8. Frank Whaling, *The Rise of the Religious Significance of Rāma*, p. 73.
9. Ralph T. Griffith, *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*, p. 563.

# CHAPTER II

# RĀMA - DHARMAJNA

Rāma is an embodiment of *dharma*. To him *dharma* is everything. Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* introduces varied types of *dharma*, like *rāja-dharma*, *kṣatriya-dharma*, *gṛhastha-dharma*, *laukika-dharma* and *varṇāśrama-dharma*. The word *dharma* is a comprehensive term. It means 'religious ordinance, principles of conduct, the whole body of religious duties, truth, the duties peculiar to each stage of life'.[1] Rāma is the supreme example of *dharma* embodying within himself all the varied functions of religious, ethical and moral practices of the day. So *Rāmāyaṇa* is not only a *dharma-śāstra*, it is also a *dharma-saṃhitā*.

Rāma does what is right. He was 'willing to undergo successive experiences of suffering, in order to fulfil what he considered to be the highest *dharma*'.[2] Suffering for truth's sake is Rāma's ideal, he is truthful Rāma goes to Daśaratha in a cheerful mood for he will be declared heir-apparent that morning. Instead, he finds his father Daśaratha in a doleful state. Rāma looks bewildered. Then Kaikeyī tells Rāma, 'If you agree to carry out without questioning what he may ask you to do, then I can tell you everything. The King himself will tell you all But if you respectfully observe what I may speak on behalf of the king, then I can tell everything'. Rāma readily agrees to Kaikeyī's stipulation. Then Kaikeyī

tells Rāma of two boons that Daśaratha has granted her formerly and she likes to have them fulfilled by the King at that time. She asks for Bharata's installation and Rāma's exile for fourteen years into Daṇḍakāraṇya forest. Rāma considers his father to be god and he readily accepts to go to the forest that very day.

Rāma tells Kaikeyī, 'I love religion like a ṛṣi and there is no greater religion than to serve one's father and to carry out his orders. ... I shall even now leave for the forest after taking mother's permission and consoling Sītā'. Rāma willingly accepts suffering for fulfilling his father's pledge to Kaikeyī on a former occasion. It introduces Rāma to a life of suffering, but to him truth is of greater significance in life. It may be said that 'Rāma the paradigmatic Hindu, completely in tune with *dharma*',[3] leads an idealized life.

Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā leaving everyone in Ayodhyā in a bewildered state start for the forests. Guha, the lord of the forest, helps Rāma to cross the river with a boat. They reach the hermitage of Bharadvāja. Finally Rāma with his brother and wife settles down in Citrakūṭa. Daśaratha dies of grief Bharata refuses to be the ruler of Ayodhyā. Bharata with a huge following proceeds to the forest hoping to bring back Rāma to Ayodhyā.

Peculiarly enough Rāma poses several questions to Bharata about the administrative arrangements he has made in Ayodhyā. Rāma asks Bharata, 'Don't you entrust most responsible works to ministers who are men of character, above bribery and have been holding the office through hereditary succession from father to son?' Rāma's views on administration clearly indicate a

Rāma-rājya as his ideal. This is a lengthy section dealing with all aspects of kingship and how benevolent the king should be to the *ṛṣis*, women and people in general. Rāma questions Bharata, 'My boy, are the womenfolk safe through your care? Don't you honour them? Do you confide any secret to them?' Rāma elaborately refers to the welfare of the people and the need for the King to protect them from all their cares and anxieties. This is a venerable document on kingship as envisaged in the days of Vālmīki.

Bharata then informs Rāma of Daśaratha's death and the people's sincere wish to see Rāma rule Ayodhyā like Indra. Requesting Rāma to return to Ayodhyā Bharata falls at Rāma's feet with tearful eyes. Rāma affectionately embraces Bharata and later moves to Mandākinī to offer watery rites to his father.

Bharata solemnly requests Rāma to return to Ayodhyā and rule the kingdom. He talks as though it is the duty of Rāma to accept kingship. But Rāma does not want to be untrue to his father's pledge to Kaikeyī. Jābāla the priest ventures to suggest that Rāma is not bound by old promises. Jābāla persuasively tells Rāma, 'Daśaratha was nobody to you, so you were none to him. He was other than your father, you are also other than his son. So act as I tell you to do'. Rāma argues forcibly, 'O sage! truth, religion, penance, charity, sweet speech, worship of gods, hospitality towards the guests, are the ways that lead to heaven. ... Your words are quite antagonistic to *Vedas* and religion, and father was to be blamed for appointing you as a priest'. Rāma calls Jābāla an atheist. Jābāla then pleads that he is no atheist, but he has said all those words only to induce Rāma to return to Ayodhyā.

This situation is effectively produced by Vālmīki. Bharata with his sincere pleas, Rāma with his innate belief in truth become lovable. Both the brothers seem to be supreme in their ideological beliefs. The first born is the rightful person to the throne, so Bharata wants Rāma to accept his responsibility to kingship. Rāma can never be untruthful, he has to honour his father's promise to Kaikeyī. So finally Bharata chooses to carry Rāma's sandals on his head and place them on the throne. For fourteen years Bharata wants to be the agent of Rāma ruling the country on his behalf. Vālmīki is at his best in the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* where familial relationships, loyalties to people,with all that old world of moral convictions are presented with tenderness and understanding. The *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* is the most domestic of all the *kāṇḍas* in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Human relationships are given considerable importance in this *kāṇḍa*. Only Kaikeyī seems to be sinning against 'degree' upsetting the normal human relationships that exist between father and son. She creates disorder and Bharata chooses to rule only from Nandigrāma, a few miles away from Ayodhyā. We admire Rāma for his adherence to truth, even if it means suffering. We appreciate Bharata's gesture in being loyal to his brother in thought, word and deed. Bharata wants to spend his days in Rāma's service. With matted locks he instals Rāma's sandals on the throne. Bharata carries on the government as a subordinate to Rāma. Bharata's loyalty to Rāma and Rāma's implicit faith in *dharma* and truth are epic examples of human behaviour.

The moment Rāma reaches Daṇḍaka forest, the ascetics appeal to Rāma for help. The Rākṣasas harass the hermits, ruin their sacrifices, and even eat them. The *ṛṣis* can curse the Rākṣasas, but thereby they lose

their religious merits. So patiently they wait for Rāma. It looks as though they have been expecting Rāma to come to Daṇḍaka forest. Rāma's *kṣatriya-dharma* immediatly goads him to accept the challenging task of protecting the *ṛṣis*. But Sītā, out of affection for Rāma, does not want him to be involved in the affairs of the Rākṣasas. She tells Rāma that the presence of arms highly inflames Kṣatriya valour. She gives the example of an ascetic who is left with a sword by Indra in disguise. This sword gradually tempts the ascetic to be cruel. So she tells Rāma, 'Please hold in respect what is proper to an ascetic. Resume the duties of a Kṣtriya after your return to Ayodhyā'. Intelligent Sītā offers the right advice to Rāma. Sītā though loyal and devoted to Rāma does not hesitate to express her own opinions firmly and fearlessly. But Rāma with his unswerving loyalty to *kṣatriya-dharma* cannot very much relish the advice. So he tells Sītā firmly, 'Without the slightest remorse I can even renounce you along with Lakṣmaṇa, but cannot swerve from my promise given to the Brāhmaṇas. How can I act otherwise when I would have done that even without their asking'. Realizing that Sītā is not convinced with his arguments, Rāma tenderly appeals to her, 'You are dearer to me than life, so please approve of my desire'. Noble Rāma never breaks his promise. This is another instance of Rāma's unquestioned faith in truth. In fact, 'outstanding among Rāma's qualities is his devotion to truth'.[4] He is unequalled in truth, he keeps promises and speaks the truth. Truth is the highest *dharma* for him and he is intent on truth.

After the abduction of Sītā the theme of suffering and separation assumes an important role in Rāma's life. He is advised by Śabarī to establish contact with Sugrīva

and the vānaras. Rāma is portrayed as the ideal ally of Sugrīva. When he hears that Vālin has taken away Sugrīva's kingdom and his wife, Rāma, the exemplar of *dharma*, sympathizes with Sugrīva. Sugrīva is encouraged by Rāma to challenge Vālin for a combat. Rāma realising that Sugrīva is overpowered by Vālin and is looking for help, takes up a dreadful shaft for destroying Vālin. Vālin being struck by Rāma falls prostrate on the ground.

Vālin attacks Rāma of injustice. He tells Rāma, 'You are born of a noble family, you are heroic. ..... I did not know you to be a hypocrite feigning piety, and addicted to vicious deeds. .... I am an innocent denizen of the forest; a 'vānara' living on fruits and roots. ... I am not at all sorry for my death, but tell me what hast thou gained by my death?'

Vālin is full of vituperation against Rāma. Rāma first refers to *rāja-dharma*. He tells Vālin, 'This land, with all its hills and forests, belongs to Ikṣvākus. ..... You are irreligious, passionate and characterless and you have committed breach of kingly virtues. .... By violating eternal principles of righteousness, you have ravished your younger brother's wife. .... You have committed great sin by securing her. You are a libertine, and have violated religion. I have therefore punished you. ... I have punished according to the sanctions of morality; we are not free but governed by religion'.

Rāma insists on *rāja-dharma* in the slaying of Vālin. But there are critics who feel that Rāma is not the ruler of the vānaras. His kingdom is restricted only to Ayodhyā. If it is not *rāja-dharma*, at least from a human angle of establishing right relationships and religious

practices, Rāma is justified in his arguments for punishing Vālin. Rāma also adds, 'I am not at all sorry for striking you from concealment. People capture deer (*mṛga*) by means of noose or trap either openly or by tying in ambush. ... I have struck you since you are a *mṛga*'. Then Rāma reiterates *rāja-dharma* where the 'king is a god who visits the earth in the form of a man. ..... I have only performed the duties appertaining to my class'. Vālin gets spiritual enlightenment after hearing Rāma's repeated references to *dharma*. He accepts Rāma's verdict and Rāma in a humane manner makes Aṅgada, Vālin's son, heir apparent to the throne.

This is another interesting scene that Vālmīki presents, fully endorsing Rāma's confirmed view of *rāja-dharma* and Vālin's accusation of Rāma and ultimate surrender to Rāma. Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* is full of ethical idealism, ennobling Rāma as a greater man, a perfect man, an ideal man. Throughout the epic Vālmīki presents Rāma as a human being but endowed with rare gifts of compassion for others, heroic virtue and kingly nobility. Among the vānaras Hanumān becomes faithfully devoted to Rāma.

When Vibhīṣaṇa comes to Rāma for protection, Rāma wholeheartedly offers him shelter. Sugrīva and other Vānaras cannot understand Rāma's view of *dharma*. They naturally fear that Vibhīṣaṇa may be a spy of Rāvaṇa. Rāma's reply to the vānaras is again an instance of his profound adherence to *dharma*. He tells Sugrīva and other vānaras, 'You see, Vibhīṣaṇa has come as a friend. Even if some fault may be detected in him, still I cannot forsake him now. It is ignoble for the good not to give shelter even to a bad man if he seeks protection'. Rāma enlightens the vānaras on

*āpad-dharma*, and explains how it is expected of good men to give shelter to anybody who asks for protection. This truth uttered by Rāma has universal validity even though one may not have Rāma's nobility and magnanimity. Rāma also adds, 'if an enemy ever seeks protection with folded palms, you should give him shelter. It is the duty of the virtuous to protect the enemy'. Sugrīva can only say, 'Rāma you are virtuous, honest and there is nothing to wonder that you will speak like this'. Vibhīṣaṇa proves himself to be a faithful devotee of Rāma.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* as a Gospel of *śaraṇāgati*, and Rāma as a devotional lord, engage our attention. Rāma is not only an embodiment of *dharma*, he is also a noble man in establishing human relationships. Rāma is an ideal example of a protector and friend of the oppressed persons like Vibhīṣaṇa.

Even on the battlefield Rāma reveals himself as an ideal foe. When Rāvaṇa comes for the first time to fight with him he finds that Rāvaṇa is a little tired and fatigued. He tells him, 'I refrain from destroying you now. Now I ask you to withdraw immediately for rest. After that come back on your chariot with your warriors and witness my prowess'. Rāvaṇa having his pride humbled enters Laṅkā with a sorrowful heart. The Devas, Asuras, all other celestials feel delighted on seeing Rāvaṇa thus worsted in fight. Rāma's amazing sense of justice and *dharma* reigns supreme even on the battlefield. When Vibhīṣaṇa is hesitant to offer funeral rites to Rāvaṇa after the war, Rāma tells Vibhīṣaṇa, 'Enmity ends with death. ... Know that Rāvaṇa was dear to me as he was to you'. Noble Rāma thus advises Vibhīṣaṇa to do his duty.

. Rāma's behaviour towards Sītā after the war is another puzzling situation in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Like the killing of Vālin, Rāma's indifferent and almost callous talk to Sītā baffles our imagination. At the end of the war with Rāvaṇa, Rāma instructs Vibhīṣaṇa to bring Sītā to him. He also insists on Sītā coming to him fully adorned. By the time she comes in the palanquin he finds that Vibhīṣaṇa is creating a lot of inconvenience to the onlookers. He is annoyed with him. In that mood he tells Sītā that she can go to any place she likes and that he is not keen on retaining her as his wife. Sītā, shaken with grief, asks him, 'As a low person abuses a low woman, why do you use all such unmentionable rude expressions against me? I am not what you take me to be'. Like Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello*, she cannot even utter the word, let alone being unfaithful to Rāma. Her refined sensibility is shaken and finally she asks Lakṣmaṇa to 'prepare a funeral pyre'. As she jumps into the fire, Sītā boldly says, 'If I am pure, let Agni protect me'.

The great gods above, Indra, Brahmā and others rush to Rāma hurriedly and inform Rāma that he is an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu and Sītā is Lakṣmī. Agni brings Sītā from the fire, and assures Rāma, that Sītā's heart is pure and he should not suspect her even for a minute.

This is a great scene of imaginative construction. Vālmīki presents Rāma as a human being, a historical figure who lived on earth. *Gṛhastha-dharma*, as Rāma visualizes, is an unblemished life with Sītā. While proving the essential purity and womanly grace of Sītā Vālmīki conveniently informs the readers of the divinity of Rāma and Sītā. It can fairly be said that 'the literature of the world has not produced a higher ideal of

womanly love, womanly truth and womanly devotion',[5] than that of Sītā. To Rāma *dharma* is the highest truth. Vālmīki succeeds in revealing the divinity of Rāma and Sītā before he brings the sacred history of Rāma to a close. Rāma explains his position, 'Had I accepted her (Sītā) without her purification, then people would have accused me saying that the son of King Daśaratha is foolish and lustful'. Rāma tells the celestials, 'O Gods! you are adorable beings, and you speak just for my good. Now I shall protect her (Sītā) for ever.[6] Heroic Rāma receives Jānakī with delight and satisfaction of having followed *gṛhastha-dharma*. This is the happy ending to an interlude of suspense and anxiety. Vālmīki prepares artistically the gradational process of elevation of Rāma to an avatāra of Viṣṇu. Rāma transcends the limitations of earthly existence.

Vālmīki brings Rāma, Sītā and all their followers to Ayodhyā. Rāma's *rāja-dharma* is revealed in his establishment of Rāma-rājya where people live in peace and prosperity. Rāma stands for the ideal of righteous kingship. Rāma-rājya, like the millennium, is the golden age of golden deeds. Rāma, *dharmajña*, is an ideal king establishing Rāma-rājya, 'at a time of great harmony when all the castes cooperated together in mutual trust. It is a time free from untimely death at the hands of man or beast or nature'.

Vālmīki's Rāma is an ideal man but through his ennobling acts of *dharma* and his suffering for the sake of truth he is elevated to the position of an avatāra of Viṣṇu. When Rāma is mentioned as an avatāra of Viṣṇu or that he is Viṣṇu himself we are neither puzzled nor perplexed. The narrative of the epic is so woven that only as a human being Rāma can kill Rāvaṇa, and only

after the death of Rāvaṇa, revelation can be made of Rāma's divinity. Rāma himself does not know that he is divine. Brahmā has to inform him that he is an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Rāma as Viṣṇu is revealed to us in the last verses of the sixth *kāṇḍa* where reference to him as Brahman is made. Vālmīki's Rāma is an ideal son, husband, brother, friend, protector and foe. The *Rāmāyaṇa* appeals 'to the head and heart of the common man as well as the elite and the intellectual'.[8] It is a grand treatise on personal qualities and conduct.The epic like Milton's *Paradise Lost* refers to the three goals of life, *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*. The two epics are concerned with the establishment of a better world of human existence, where peace prevails and justice is done to everyone. The *Rāmāyaṇa* with its Rāma-rājya and *Paradise Lost* with its concept of a millennium show greater involvement in good living than in personal salvation as in the *Mahābhārata*. Rāma, the ideal king is renowned, majestic, illustrious, noble, resplendent, loved by the world like Indra. This is Vālmīki's Rāma. The story of the epic is 'a paradigm, expressive of a classical archetype'.[9]

## REFERENCES

1. Frank Whaling, *The Rise of the Religious Significance of Rama*, p. 39,
2. ibid. p. 39.
3. V. Raghavan (ed.), *The Rāmāyaṇa Tradition in Asia*, p. 45.
4. Frank Whaling, op.cit. p. 48.
5. R.C. Dutt. *The Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata* translated into English, Epilogue, p. 160.
6. In *Uttara-kāṇḍa*, Rāma sends away Sītā to the forests as though he is fulfilling her wish to visit the hermitages. Rāma's behaviour thus becomes treacherous and Vālmīki would not have

belittled Rāma's character. So *Uttara-kāṇḍa* has to be treated as an independent work by some other writer or writers.

7. Frank Whaling, op.cit. p. 69.
8. S.L.N. Sinha, *The Rāmāyaṇa - The Story and Significance of Vālmīki's Epic*, p. 4.
9. V. Raghavan, op.cit. p. 45.

## CHAPTER III

# RĀMA AND SĪTA EXEMPLARS OF DOMESTIC VIRTUES

Vālmiki's Rāma and Sītā represent the Indian ideal of monogamous marriage. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is a veritable record of domestic bonds. Especially the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* reflects tender affections and noble sentiments. The *Rāmāyaṇa* exhibits pictures of domestic life and manners. It is observed that in presenting domestic life, 'the Sanskrit epics are more true and real than those Greek and Roman epics'.[1] The Greek and Roman epics are mostly governed by the whims and fancies of gods and goddesses.

Rāma's installation as heir-apparent is fraught with negation through Kaikeyī's last minute demands for the granting of the two boons promised by Daśaratha earlier. Rāma accepts the conditions imposed by Kaikeyī of going into the forests and installation of Bharata as heir-apparent in his place.

Rāma wants to console Sītā and make her stay in Ayodhyā. Sītā's relationship with him is partly based on *dharma*, and partly on love for Rāma. So Sītā first talks of what her parents have told her that a wife's duty is to be with her husband in times of woe or bliss. She wants to be a shadow for Rāma all the time, in adversity as well as prosperity. When Rāma is still hesitant to take Sītā into the forest, Sītā says tauntingly, 'If father

knew that you are a man only in form, but in nature a woman, he would not have certainly conferred me on you'. And she questions, 'why are you so sad? For which fear you are willing to leave your devoted wife?' Later she assures Rāma, 'Know me as devoted to you as Sāvitrī to Satyavān'. Sītā is all devotion to Rāma. She loves Rāma and she cannot be separated from him. Rāma finally agrees to take Sītā with him to the forests. He thinks he will be like the royal saints who repair to the forests with their wives.

In Citrakūṭa, swayed by the idyllic atmosphere of nature, Rāma reveals his innate love for Sītā. Far off and remote from social conventions Rāma feels free to express his joyousness in the company of Sītā. Rāma has affinity with nature. The natural phenomenon of rocks and caves, trees and creepers indicates to him supreme bliss. In the first year of his stay in Chitrakūṭa Rāma sees the Kiṃśuka flowers adorning the trees making the forest look fiery red. The Bhallātaka and Bilva trees bend with the weight of the flowers and fruits. Big honeycombs hang from the trees. The peacock responds to the cries of the woodcock. The elephants move about freely. Rāma and Sītā experience a new delight in witnessing the sylvan pomp and splendour. Rāma tells Sītā, 'Look Sītā, the flowery vale seems to be a pleasure haunt of sylvan gods and goddesses. Look the whole forest has grown resonant with the sweetness of the cuckoo, Bhṛṅgarāja and other melodious singers of the wood'. Rāma explains to Jānaki, 'Here flows Mandākinī. Its banks are most beautiful. Look how the thirsty deer drinks from the muddy water from the bank. .... Look how hosts of flowers being moved by the branches are kissing the crystal stream of Mandākinī'.

The epic is full of these beautiful descriptive accounts associated with Rāma and Sītā in their period of exile. The wedded love of Rāma and Sītā gets intensified. Rāma tells Jānakī, 'At the sight of these beautiful hills I don't so much feel for the loss of the kingdom, nor so keenly for the separation from friends'. Rāma adds, 'Bathing thrice in the river and living on wild fruits and roots, and drinking honey in your company I do not even crave for the kingdom of Ayodhyā'. Rāma and Sītā behave as though they are free from social restrictions and conventions.

In Chitrakūṭa they enjoy the bliss of conjugal life. Looking at Sītā with lovingness Rāma exclaims, 'Look how the creeper has twined its delicate tendrils round the blossoming mango tree as you throw your arms round me when there is none nearby'. Thus saying Rāma embraces Sītā and loving Sītā, bashful as the goddess of wealth and beauty, reclines on her husband's arm and they enjoy each other's company as beloved lovers.

This is a magnificent scene of happy married life, and this reminds us of the delightful picture of Adam and Eve enjoying paradisal bliss in their prelapsarian state in Book IV of *Paradise Lost*. The relationship of Rāma and Sītā 'constitutes one of the great symbols of the centrality of the marriage bonds'.[2] While moving about in Citrakūṭa Rāma sees a cave by chance. With tender affection Rāma asks Jānakī, 'O Vaidehi! do you like that beautiful place? Then let us just rest for a while. Look at the back of the stone, so square, so smooth as if it was set for you. Look, how yonder flower shrub like a Kesarī tree overshadows your head'. Then Jānakī in soft endearing tones tells Rāma, 'O flower of Raghu

line! my pleasure is to do thy will. It is enough for me to know your wish'.

When Sītā sees a monkey she gets frightened. Rāma places his mighty arm round her waist and drives away the monkey. In the close embrace the gleaming mark on Sītā's brow gets painted on Rāma's chest. Sītā seeing the red mark on Rāma gleefully laughs. Rāma's love for Sītā is pure, ethereal and magnanimous. Sītā's devotion to Rāma is unique, unparalleled and wholesome. Vālmīki describes these delightful moments of love of Rāma and Sītā with tenderness and poetic imagination.

After moving to Daṇḍaka forest Rāma promises the *ṛṣis* all help against the Rākṣasas pestering them and ruining their sacrifices. Sītā feels that Rāma should not have involved himself in the cause of the *ṛṣis*. She thinks that 'a kṣatriya hero should do only that much which might be necessary for the protection of the ascetics living in the forest, and nothing more'. She adds, 'Please hold in respect what is proper to an ascetic. Resume the duties of a kṣatriya after you return to Ayodhyā'. Sītā is quite clear in her mind that unnecessarily Rāma may get involved in a conflict with the Rākṣasas, and what she fears comes to be true. This counselling is another aspect of Sītā's relationship with Rāma.

The only occasion when Sītā fails to act according to her reasoning power is when she sees the golden deer and takes a fancy for it. She sends away both Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa and gets into the clutches of Rāvaṇa. Śūrpaṇakhā, defaced by Lakṣmaṇa, first gets her brothers, Khara and Dūṣaṇa engaged in a battle with Rāma. Rāma by himself kills thousands of Rākṣasas. Śūrpaṇakhā therefore tempts Rāvaṇa to get Sītā, the most

beautiful woman, for himself. This abduction of Sītā leads to the great warfare in Laṅkā.

Rāma's grief is inconsolable when he loses Sītā. In his bewilderment he asks every flowering shrub about Sītā. Human Rāma bewails for the loss of Sītā from Pañcavaṭī.

Peculiarly enough after having won the battle with Rāvaṇa, and after getting Sītā in a palanquin led by Vibhīṣaṇa and other Rākṣasa guards, Rāma talks to Sītā in an uncharitable way. On seeing Sītā, Rāma is overwhelmed with grief, joy and anger. While grief and joy in Rāma are understandable, Rāma's anger seems to be unusual Apparently he is angry with Vibhīṣaṇa who seems to be creating unnecessary ado about Sītā's coming. Even this trait in Rāma is quite human We often show our anger on others who do not deserve it. Prince Hamlet sees Ophelia after a long time, so his first reaction is one of love. So he addresses her, 'Nymph in thy orisons', but soon he detects two persons behind the arras, watching and overhearing him. So he talks rudely to Ophelia even though after her death he confesses boldly that forty thousand brothers with all their love cannot be equated with his love for her. Rāma, who is all love for Sītā and for whom he has fought with Rāvaṇa, talks unkindly.

lady it was not love for thee
That led mine army over the sea
I battled to avenge the cause
Of honour and insulted laws
My love is fled, for on thy face
Lies the dark blot of sin and shame.
Go where thou wilt but not with me

These are indeed unkind words from Rāma. His crudeness perplexes us as well as Sītā. We have known him to be urbane, friendly and lovable. Especially to Sītā he has been the lord of tender affection. Vālmīki manages this scene as a prelude to the greater heights of divinity to which Rāma and Sītā have to ascend. It is likely that some of the Vānara and Rākṣasa onlookers may have been whispering something, and Rāma may have taken it as an adverse criticism of his behaviour. Sītā like Shakespeare's Desdemona and Hermione protests against Rāma's verdict on her. She says:

Such words befit the meanest hind,
Not princely birth and generous mind.
By all my virtuous life I swear
I am not what thy words declare.

Sītā's refined sensibility, her devotion to Rāma, all get perplexed. Finally she tells Lakṣmaṇa to prepare the sacrificial fire. The Vānaras, the Rākṣasas, all look at Rāma bewildered, but he is unmoved. Sītā enters the fire.

Vālmīki creates this situation so that human Rāma can be elevated from this humiliating state. The gods above, Brahmā, Indra, Yama and other celestials appear before Rāma. Brahmā questions Rāma:

Dost thou not yet, supremely wise,
Thy heavenly nature recognize?

Rāma can only say:

I deem myself a mortal man;
Of old Ikṣvāku's line, I spring
From Daśaratha, Kosala's King.

Vālmīki presents Rāma as a real man who lived on this earth - an ideal king. He also makes Brahmā reveal the divine providence of Rāma and Sītā. Brahmā says:

Thou art the Lord Nārāyaṇa, thou the God
In whom all creatures bow

and he adds

Queen Sītā of the lovely brows
Is Lakṣmī thy celestial spouse.

Immediately after this revelation, much to the amazement of the onlookers, Sītā rises from the fire resplendent and glorious. Agni, the God of fire, presents Sītā to Rāma and he accepts her with supreme joy. Rāma is glad that Sītā has demonstrated her unblemished chastity to the world and he promises to be always faithful to her. Vālmīki thus gives to the monogamous marriage of Rāma and Sītā a uniqueness, sanctity and divinity.

Rāma's behaviour in the last moment of his stay in Lankā baffles us, but very soon the presence of gods revealing the divinity of Rāma and Sītā helps us in finding Rāma flying with Sītā and other trusted followers to Ayodhyā. While flying Rāma shows to Sītā the various spots of warfare with Rāvana, then they reach Kiskindha. Sītā wants Sugrīva's wife Rumā and Tārā to follow them to Ayodhyā. Glorious Rāma is all affection for Sītā. The momentary suspense about Sītā's inviolable chastity is clean forgotten by both of them. Rāma and Sītā symbolize conjugal felicity and domestic harmony.

Welcoming Rāma, Ayodhyā takes a festive look. Rāma's auspicious return to Ayodhyā is signalized by nature's rejoicing 'All the barren trees brought forth fruits, those that were devoid of flowers were covered

with blooms, and those that were dry became adorned with green leaves'. Happiness is spread everywhere. Truthful Rāma, suffering for truth's sake adorns the throne. This reminds us of nature becoming fertile after sixteen years of barrenness when Perdita touches the land of Sicily in *The Winter's Tale*. Sītā like Lakṣmī sits by Rāma in all her splendorous glow. The gods above participate in the investiture ceremony. Rāma sits on the golden throne directed by Vaśiṣṭha. The priest places on Rāma's head a glittering crown with which Manu and other kings have been crowned in successive generations. The gods and the Gandharvas sing joyfully while the Kinnaras dance in ecstasy. Rāma offers to Brahmins various gifts of cows, rich apparel and glorious ornaments. Rāma gives to Sugrīva a jewelled necklace. Jānakī presents a jewelled necklace to Hanumān. Rāma feels happy about it.

The sacred story of Rāma and Sītā as an ideally married pair and as exemplars of the Indian ideal of a monogamous marriage is celebrated by Vālmīki in a glorious manner. Rāma and Sītā symbolise a magnanimous human relationship through an ideal marriage.

Unlike the kings of his day, Rāma views marriage as sacred. Vālmīki with his poetic excellence describes the scenes of domestic love imbued with lyrical ecstasy. It is indeed gratifying to note that Vālmīki presents the refined sentiments of love with delicacy and understanding. The poet is equally good in presenting the rugged scenes of warfare between Rāvaṇa and Rāma.

Vālmīki also gives to the readers a peep into the lascivious life of the kings and their countless wives as contrasted with the sanctity of marriage laws and

conventions observed by Rāma and Sītā. Hanumān, in search of Sītā in Laṅkā, enters the palace of Rāvaṇa and sees in utter amazement women lying in all sorts of romantic poses. He sees one beautiful woman embracing the lyre (*vīṇā*) like an amorous girl hugging her lover to her bosom. Hanumān gets a jolt. But to his great admiration and veneration he finds Sītā, in the Aśoka forest, surrounded by Rākṣasa women. In the Aśoka forest 'Sītā is like a *cakravāka* bird being separated from her mate'. When Rāvaṇa visits her and tries to win her, Sītā boldly tells him, 'I am another person's wife and am chaste. Don't take me for a common woman. ... Your wealth and resources will be of no avail when thou hast contracted enmity with Rāma'. Rāvaṇa becomes furious and gives her time to change her mind, or else his cooks will serve her for his morning meal. Hanumān watches the whole scene unobserved.

Hanumān after showing Rāma's ring and after convincing Sītā that he is sent by Rāma, ventures to suggest, 'I shall rescue you from suffering at the hands of the Rākṣasas as I shall be able to cross the ocean easily taking you on my back'. Sītā replies, 'I do not wish to touch the body of a third person. Wicked Rāvaṇa forcibly touched my person, but what could I do? Then I was quite helpless and overwhelmed with grief and fear. It is now Rāma's duty to come personally and rescue me from this place'. Hanumān is delighted with Sītā's words. He finds her a fitting consort to Rāma. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is as much the story of Sītā as of Rāma. It is *sītāyaś caritam mahat*. Vālmīki chooses to elevate Jānakī to a triumphant position in her sacred partnership with Rāma.

Apart from describing the domestic harmony of Rāma and Sītā in a monogamous marriage, Vālmīki refers to other aspects of domestic life very vividly in the epic. Domestic life in its totality is depicted by Vālmīki, for we find that 'children are dutiful to parents, younger brothers are respectful to elder brothers, parents are fond of their children'.[3] When Daśaratha has to accede to the demands of Kaikeyī, he faints, and when Rāma comes he can only look at him in a bewildered state. He is speechless. Daśaratha is extremely fond of Rāma, and Rāma considers his father to be a god. It is only Kaikeyī who dictates the terms to Rāma and he willingly accepts the conditions for he has to honour the pledge of his father. That is more important to Rāma than owning a kingdom. Rāma's mother Kausalyā is shaken with grief. She wants to follow Rāma into the forests as a cow follows the calf.

Lakṣmaṇa requests Rāma to be allowed to accompany him to the forest. He says, 'Ārya! if you are thus resolved to repair into the forest full of wild animals, then I shall go ahead of you with bow in my hand, and you will roam about with me. ... Being separated from you I do not wish for heavenly bliss or immortality nor all the wealth in the triple World'. This is Lakṣmaṇa paying his supreme homage to Rāma. His loyalty to Rāma is a glorious example of brotherly love. Equally moving is the sincere love of Bharata for Rāma. Instead of accepting the throne as his mother Kaikeyī has contrived, he along with the priests and the people of Ayodhyā runs to Cirtakūṭa to make Rāma yield to *rājadharma*. Bharata humbly suggests to Rāma, 'It wont be possible for me to rule the vast kingdom or to please the subjects. As the cultivator anxiously waits for rain, so all the people are eagerly waiting for you. Therefore

accept the kingdom'. But Rāma, steadfast in his observation of *dharma*, finds his adherence to his father's pledge to Kaikeyī as his primary obligation. Rāma does what is right according to him. Bharata finally places Rāma's sandals on the throne and rules Ayodhyā for fourteen years as an ascetic from Nandigrāma. Before returning to Ayodhyā Rāma feels that after fourteen years Bharata may have developed a liking for the kingship. So he sends Hanumān to find out Bharata's reaction to Rāma's return to Ayodhyā. Bharata is the happiest person in Ayodhyā on the day Rāma returns. He places the sandals on Rāma's feet and touchingly observes, 'This day my life has been blessed and my desire has been fulfilled seeing you again back in Ayodhyā'. Brotherly love is glorified through Bharata and Lakṣmaṇa. The *Rāmāyaṇa* appeals to the young and the old, to the educated as well as the uneducated for the domestic relationships are realistically presented in the epic. Rāma, Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and all the major characters in the epic have become proverbial for their domestic virtues.

Especially Rāma is an ideal example of human relationships, as son, husband, brother, friend, protector and enemy. Rāma and Sītā are loved and venerated as perfect human beings, exemplary in their character, and ennobling in their ethical idealism. In depicting scenes of human affection Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* is magnificent. In expressing 'universal feelings and emotions which belong to human nature at all times and in all places Sanskrit epic poetry is unparalleled even by Greek epics'.[4]

The *Rāmāyaṇa* on the whole is not of an age but of all times. The social conventions and domestic relationships, as mentioned, especially in the *Ayodhyā-*

*kāṇḍa* still have relevance to the Indian society today. Rāma and Sītā serve as archetypal figures for the Indians even though it may be difficult to emulate their righteous conduct. In fact 'no book can be a book of veneration unless it both speaks to the spirit of the people and reflects that people's values'.[5] This is true of the *Rāmāyaṇa* that remains as a monumental example of human behaviour in all its grandeur. The epic has become a national epic. Both the Indian epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* have an undying appeal to the millions of Indians. Rāma and Sītā particularly enrich the Indian tradition of monogamous marriage with all its sanctity and solemnity.

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## CHAPTER IV

# RĀMA, SUBLIME HERO AND IDEAL KING

Vālmīki presents Rāma as an ideal hero and a noble king. Vālmīki's Rāma is mostly human with typical human feelings and emotions. He is a sublime hero, *dhīrodātta*, who fights only for establishing good over evil. Only towards the close of the epic revelation is made that Rāma is an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu and that Sītā is Lakṣmī. This process of elevating human Rāma into a supreme god is artistically rendered by Vālmiki, through an oddity in Rāma's character. In the last section of the sixth *kāṇḍa*, Rāma behaves like a typical jealous husband in attacking Sītā's essential purity. Out of this common domestic situation Vālmīki brings about a transcendence and sublimity to the two epic characters Rāma and Sītā as Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī. This transformation, this metamorphosis of a human into a divine being is essentially necessitated, for Rāvaṇa, the terror of the three worlds at that time, can be subdued only by a man, a perfect man.

Rāma functions as a great hero, unassailable, and unconquerable. Vālmīki gives a detailed description of Rāma's handsome, physical appearance. Rāma is 'broad shouldered' and 'long armed', with a 'conch shaped neck'. He has 'a strong breast' and 'well proportioned limbs'. This gives us a good picture of Rāma

as a warrior unsurpassed in his grandeur and majesty. Vālmīki's Rāma has specific heroic qualities and he is like Indra in valour. Vālmīki idealizes Rāma as a grand hero, and this is indeed the transcendent admiration given to a great hero. It may be said that 'in all epochs of the world's history, we shall find the great man to have been the indispensable saviour of his epoch'.[1] That is Rāma in his age, saving the ṛṣis and the gods from the tyranny of Rāvaṇa.

Vālmīki first exhibits the heroic deeds of Rāma when Viśvāmitra takes him and his brother Lakṣmaṇa at the tender age of sixteen, to protect his sacrifices from the unruly Rāksasas. Rāma succeeds in saving the sacrificial fires from the onslaughts of the Rāksasas by killing them or by driving them away. Later Rāma bends the bow in Janaka's palace, gets married to Jānakī, his daughter, and in many temples Rāma is still portrayed as 'Kodaṇḍa-dhārī' or 'Kodaṇḍa Rama', the bearer of the supreme bow. This is the superb heroic deed of Rāma in the conventional sense.

In the epic Rāma is not only known for his martial heroism, but also for his heroic virtue. The growth in Rāma from a purely physical hero to an unrivalled hero of undaunted courage is significant. This reflects Rāma's refined sensibility and moral consciousness. It is 'this sharp focus on to the central figure in his massive isolation that gives the great epics their grandeur and universality'.[2] Rāma, the resplendent hero of the epic, reveals himself as a perfect man when he accepts Kaikeyī's stipulations and willingly fulfils his father's pledge of two boons to Kaikeyī. The people of Ayodhyā, his mother Kausalyā, his father Daśaratha, all feel bewildered by Rāma's unhesitating heroic action. The

people of Ayodhyā follow Rāma upto the river Tamasā. Already they express their supreme admiration for the truly great hero Rāma. Rāma is good in establishing human relationships. At the human level Rāma is 'an ideal example of a hero and a king. He is the eternal wielder of the bow, the archetypal Kṣatriya who fights. ... There is some continuity between Rāma and Indra'.[3]

Rāma's love of nature is equally admirable.In Citrakūṭa Rāma spends time joyously with Sītā while appreciating the phenomenon of nature. Despite all the suffering he accepts and undertakes for truth's sake, he has also a few moments of relaxation in the wide, open spaces of nature, untrammeled by the cobwebs of royal customs. Apparently Rāma enjoys the company of Sītā better in the wide forests and nature's glorious spots. He is in tune with nature's loveliness and beauty. When Sītā is carried away by Rāvaṇa he goes to every tree and shrub searching for Sītā. This is typically human of Rāma. Rāma is humane in his relationship with others.

Bharata comes to Citrakūṭa with the hope of taking back Rāma to Ayodhyā. Rāma is very affectionate to Bharata, but he is true to his heroic virtue and he does not yield to Bharata's entreaties. For the first time we get a peep into Rāma's mind as a ruler by the questions he puts to Bharata. Vālmīki reveals an amazing world of kingship to which Rāma is the legitimate successor. Rāma questions Bharata, 'do the people even when severely punished show any disrespect towards you? Do the priests scorn you as women hate lustful people who use force against them?' The large number of questions that Rāma puts to Bharata are varied, comprehensive and indicative of the supreme knowledge

that Rāma possesses about kingship. He has given up kingship not as though he is unsuited to it, but he is firm in fulfilling the pledge of Daśaratha to Kaikeyī. The inquisitiveness and the awareness with which Rāma poses questions to Bharata unmistakably reveals to us the future ideal king of Rāma-rājya.

In the Daṇḍaka forest Rāma promises protection to the *ṛṣis* from the evil forces in the forest. He realizes that it is his *dharma* to ] protect them. The Śūrpaṇakhā episode also compels Rāma to kill thousands of Rākṣasas in Janasthāna. Even before Rāma exhibits his valour on the battlefield in Laṅkā he amply proves himself to be the great hero of the epic. His association with Hanumān, Sugrīva and other vānaras is another aspect of human Rāma who establishes friendly relationships with vānaras and later with Vibhīṣaṇa that most 'traditions regard Rāma as a real man, who lived on this earth, an ideal king'.[4]

In the *Kiṣkindhā-kāṇḍa* of the epic, the most controversial aspect of Rāma's character as a hero is the killing of Vālin, that too from behind a tree. Vālmīki no doubt explains the killing as a part of *rāja-dharma*. Especially when Rāma tries to argue that he has killed Vālin as a *mṛga*, that is often killed by a hunter from behind a tree, we feel that the explanation is unsound. But what compels the generous Rāma to kill Vālin is the prior commitment he has with Sugrīva. The moment he sees Sugrīva surrendering to him, Rāma, the devotional lord, is all sympathy for him. Rāma promises Sugrīva that he will restore to him, his wife and kingdom held unlawfully by Vālin. The justness of the deed pleases Rāma. Also the *laukika-dharma* demands that he should help Sugrīva for he expects full support from

him and his vānaras in rescuing Sītā. On the whole Rāma has to suffer in fulfilling his promises and in observing *dharma* He is the embodiment of *dharma* and he acts accordingly Rāma makes Angada, Vālin's son, heir apparent to the throne Sugrīva's self-surrender follows the doctrine, *prapatti*, and he becomes a devotee of Rāma.

Rāma's anger for the Lord of the ocean is another instance of his human nature. Even though Rāma is generous and tolerant, occasionally he exhibits his rage. When Sāgara delays in allowing Rāma's army to go on the sea, Rāma naturally loses his patience with him. On all such occasions Rāma is seen more as a human being than as a divine person.

On the battlefield when he sees Lakṣmaṇa lying prostrate, unable to move about, Rāma expresses human emotions and feelings, compelling us to sympathize with him in his moment of grief Garuḍa comes to the rescue of Laksmaṇa. He tells Rāma to be careful with the Rākṣasas who are capable of using magical spells. While leaving Rāma, Garuḍa tells him, 'Rāma! thou art virtuous, you have kindness even to your enemies. You will know everything when you will win the war. You will soon be successful in receiving Jānakī after destroying Rāvaṇa' To human Rāma, Garuḍa's positive assurance of the restoration of Sītā and the defeat of Rāvaṇa gives a new hope and added confidence to fight with Rāvaṇa

In this epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Vālmīki chooses to give to Rāvaṇa an admirable picture of heroic exploits. Like Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Rāvaṇa is a counter-hero still retaining some praiseworthy qualities like

heroic valour and courage never to yield. Like Satan, Rāvaṇa holds a council of war before attacking Rāma and his vānara army. Peculiarly enough Rāvaṇa confesses that he is madly in love with Sītā, the most beautiful woman in the world. While Kumbhakarṇa, Rāvaṇa's brother, first condemns Rāvaṇa's act of abducting Sītā, finally he agrees to support him. Only Vibhīṣaṇa gives the right advice to Rāvaṇa to send back Sītā to Rāma. He has to pay a heavy price for speaking the truth for Rāvaṇa banishes him and Vibhīṣaṇa becomes a devotee of Rāma. His surrender to Rāma is completely devotional and he gets the kingdom of Laṅkā ultimately as a reward for showing *prapatti* to Rama.

Vālmīki portrays Rāvaṇa with sympathetic understanding. He gives the devil his due. Rāvaṇa is learned, has studied *Vedas* and *vedāṅgas*, and is given to severe austerities. He is proud of his conquest of the three worlds. Neither gods, nor Gandharvas, can face him in a battle. He defeats his step brother Kubera and gets from him *puṣpaka-vimāna*. Only a human being like heroic Rāma can defeat Rāvaṇa and put him to death.

Mandodarī and Mālyavant realize that Rāma is the invincible foe to Rāvaṇa. Mālyavant, Rāvaṇa's uncle, tells Rāvaṇa, 'Perhaps he (Rāma) is Viṣṇu incarnate in human form. Go and conclude peace with him'. However Rāvaṇa decides to fight with Rāma and nothing can deter him from his decision. First time when Rāvaṇa fights with Rāma, he tells Rāvaṇa, 'You are exhausted now, therefore I refrain from destroying you now'. Finally in the great battle with Rāvaṇa, Rāma excels his foe. Even Rāvaṇa is frightened with the dreadful wrath of Rāma. The denizens of heaven watch 'with intent the great fight between the two formidable warriors'. They

take either Rāma's or Rāvaṇa's side and pray for the victory of their favorite. The Asuras pray for Rāvaṇa's victory and the gods for that of Rāma. Vālmīki presents the war in a judicious and just manner. Rāma addresses Rāvaṇa in anger, 'Thou worst of the Rākṣasas, thou hast carried off my helpless wife from Janasthāna without thinking of the consequences and thou shalt be destroyed for that reason'.

Various kinds of evil portents presage the fall of Rāvaṇa and the rise of Rāma. The gods begin to rain blood upon Rāvaṇa's chariot and a fierce tornado begins to sweep the battlefield. Vultures hover about in the sky. The city of Laṅkā is caught in fire. Various kinds of evil omens are seen in the sky. The denizens of heaven watch the fight between Rāma and Rāvaṇa day and night without any respite or intermission. Heroic Rāma finally takes up *brahmāstra* and sends his weapon. It pierces Rāvaṇa's heart. Rāvaṇa falls and the remnants of his army run away. The vānaras roam about in delight. By the grace of Rāma, the desires of Sugrīva, Aṅgada and Vibhīṣaṇa are fulfilled. All feel delighted at Rāvaṇa's death. The sky grows clear, the sun becomes bright and the earth becomes an abode of peace. Rāma surrounded by his friends and followers appears like Indra encircled by the gods in heaven.

The fall of Rāvaṇa creates an unprecedented lamentation in Laṅkā. Mandodarī, Rāvaṇa's chief queen, laments in an inconsolable manner referring to Rāvaṇa's major victories over Indra and other gods. Vibhīṣaṇa too expresses grief. He tells Rāma, 'He (Rāvaṇa) contributed to the prosperity of his friends and in the destruction of the enemies. He was well versed in *Vedas* and *vedāṅgas*, a great Yogī and was chief amongst the

performers of Agnihotra sacrifice and other rites. Now if you permit, I may perform the funeral rites'. Vibhīṣaṇa praises Rāvaṇa in a generous manner though driven out of Laṅkā. Rāma graciously assures Vibhīṣaṇa that he can perform the funeral rites. Rāma kindly adds, 'Know that Rāvaṇa was dear to me as he was to you'. Rāma is generous to Rāvaṇa even though he fulfils *rāja-dharma* in killing him. Vālmīki shows Rāvaṇa as a great warrior. Rāma reveals himself as a man with human emotions when he gives the due praise to Rāvaṇa.

The only disputable situation that Vālmīki creates for Rāma after the great war with Rāvaṇa is his total disregard of Sītā after having invited her to come. As Sītā observes, Rāma behaves like a hind, not like a prince. Vālmīki contrives the scene in such a manner that it leads to the revelation of Rāma and Sītā as Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī. Vālmīki is a good story teller. Out of this ordinary domestic scene he elevates Rāma and Sītā to divinity.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* presents Rāma and Sītā as exemplars of monogamous marriage. Rāma's human relationships, his unrivalled heroic qualities, his justness and kindness to all those who surrender to him are vividly described in the epic. Throughout the epic we find the theme of self-surrender or *prapatti* dominating. In the *Bāla-kāṇḍa* we see the gods surrendering to Viṣṇu for getting relief from Rāvaṇa's tyranny. In the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* the ṛṣis tortured by the Rākṣasas surrender to Rāma. In the *Kiṣkindhā-kāṇḍa* Sugrīva becomes an ally of Rāma and recognizes him as his saviour. In the *Sundara-kāṇḍa* peculiarly enough Trijaṭā encourages the Rākṣasa women to surrender to Sītā. In the *Yudha-kāṇḍa* Vibhīṣaṇa, Rāvaṇa's brother, comes to Rāma in supplication for

protection. Vibhīṣaṇa is all veneration for Rāma and he identifies himself with Rāma wholeheartedly. On the whole the epic is a Gospel of *Śaraṇāgati*. Complete surrender to Lord Rāma, in various contexts, reigns supreme in the epic.

Rāma is not merely a great hero, but also an ideal king. Even though he relinquishes kingship to fulfil his father's pledge to Kaikeyī, he has a genuine love for kingship. Vālmīki presents Rāma as an ideal king, 'renowned', 'illustrious', 'noble', 'greatly resplendent' and he is like Indra 'lord of the world'. Rāma observes *rāja-dharma* meticulously and Rama-rājya is his ideal kingdom. 'The principles of Rāma-rājya and *rāja-dharma* apply not merely to Ayodhyā but to other regions as well'.[5] In fact Rāma-rājya like the millennium is the golden age of golden deeds. Rāma-rājya is an ideal kingdom on earth. Rāma-rājya belongs to an age when social harmony prevails. It is a time when all the castes cooperate together in mutual trust. It is a time free from untimely deaths. ... It is a time when all works reap happy results'.[6]

The epic closes with a reference to the ideal kingdom of Rāma. Vālmīki describes Rāma-rājya: 'Nobody attempted to do any violence to anybody out of their respect and love for Rāma. ... Everyone was healthy and free from disease, and trees always brought forth fruits and flowers. .... None spoke falsehood, everybody had an auspicious look'. Finally the benediction is given, 'He who listens to this great epic ... with due respect meets with no obstacle in life. He lives happily with his near and dear ones and gets his desired boons from Rāma'. The epic closes on a note of well-being for all humanity. Rāma firmly establishes the ideal of

righteous kingship. On the whole Rāma, a dynastic hero promotes the ideal Indian kingdom. Vālmīki's Rāma is an ideal king, a great hero, a loving husband, a dutiful son, an affectionate brother and a devotional lord.

Rāma and his kingdom 'have more immediate relevance to this world than Kṛṣṇa and the salvation he brings. They have more relevance to the ordinary man than the deeper mysteries of Kṛṣṇa'.[7] Even though some western scholars think that 'Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were exalted by the Brahmans to divine rank'.[8] Rāma and Kṛṣṇa alone, of all the incarnations, have been accepted by the people as gods mostly because of the two epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. The two epics have glorified and idealized both the heroes, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Especially Rāma with his adherence to *dharma* has endeared himself to the people as a perfect man, a sublime hero and an ideal king. Sītā figures in the epic as a paragon of womanly virtues and graces. 'The character of Rāma is nobly portrayed. It is only too consistently unselfish to be human'[9].

Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* portrays Rāma mostly as an ideal man, a noble person. Only towards the close we are given an idea of Rāma's divinity. The *Ādhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* and *Rāmacaritamānas*, two poetical compositions of later ages, have added to the monumental picture of Vālmīki's Rāma. The *Ādhyātma* sees Rāma not only as a personal god but also as Nirguṇa-brahman 'absolute reality'. Tulasi Das in his *Rāmcarita-mānas* stresses the primacy of loving devotion. Rāma the devotional lord is a supreme example of *dharma*. Most Indian traditions regard Rāma as an ideal king. Vālmīki views Rāma as an ideal king and an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu.

Rāma, the sublime hero, who fights for a just cause, is the noble king of Rāma-rājya.

It is generally believed that 'there are in the whole range of world's literature few more charming poems than the *Rāmāyaṇa*'.[10] The epic has acquired this distinction mostly because of the two illustrious characters, Rāma the perfect man, Sītā the noblest woman.

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# CHAPTER V

## THE RĀMĀYAṆA AND APOCALYPSE

The word 'apocalypse' signifies revelation. In almost all the epics divine providence manifests itself in some form or other. To bring heavenly matter to earthly level and to measure things in heaven by things on earth, as Milton does in *Paradise Lost*, is indeed a formidable task. Milton's God in *Paradise Lost* and Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Mahābhārata* reveal themselves as gods even though some anthropomorphic touch is given to them, for they figure as speaking characters in the epics. Rāma is mostly a perfect man and an ideal king. Revelation about Rāma's divinity is given in an indirect manner by Brahmā and other gods who appear in the last section of the epic. Rāma does not reveal himself as God.

Apocalyptic poetry 'always relies on some analogy to human experience'.[1] Vālmīki portrays Rāma as an exalted person, a great hero and an ideal king, for he can reveal the divinity of Rāma only after Rāvaṇa's death. To a large extent, Rāma's human experiences endear him to the reader mostly at the human level. These human experiences finally lead to the auspicious revelation of Rāma's divinity. It is also true that the doctrine of accommodation helps the epic poets in accommodating God to the level of human understanding. The Gods functioning as speaking characters in the epics use a language that is understood by the readers. Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā* section of the *Mahābhārata* clearly states:

Quickly I come
To those who offer me
Every action,
Worship me only.

The *Gītā* is an exposition of Lord Kṛṣṇa's message of protection to all those who worship him. More things are done by prayer than we dream of, seems to be Kṛṣṇa's offer to humanity.

Vālmīki's presentation of Rāma as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu is done in an indirect manner. In the *Bāla-kāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Vālmīki uses the technique of 'prophetic writing, writing which is productive of future events'.[3] Very artistically Vālmīki gives the prophetic utterance that Viṣṇu will incarnate in the human form as Rāma. With great mastery over narration Vālmīki introduces the prophecy of future events. The gods above much harassed by Rāvaṇa, Laṅkā's monarch, appeal to Brahmā for protection. He tells them that he has given a boon to Rāvaṇa that neither gods, nor Gandharvas nor Rākṣasas can kill him. Brahmā adds, 'In disdain he (Rāvaṇa) did not mention the name of Man'. So only a perfect man can kill Rāvaṇa. The gods request Viṣṇu, to be born as the son of Daśaratha. 'Daśaratha, the generous and powerful king of Ayodhyā, has three queens. ... Please incarnate as man on earth and slay in battle Rāvaṇa the scourge of the world'. They add 'Rāvaṇa is tyrannizing the saints and denizens of the heaven'. Then Viṣṇu promises them, 'For your good I shall destroy formidable Rāvaṇa with his race, and shall rule over the earth for eleven thousand years'.

Vālmīki gives this as a prophecy in the first *kāṇḍa*, *Bāla-kāṇḍa*, of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This is the technique

adopted by the apocalyptic poetry, of giving the reader an idea of the future events. From the second *kāṇḍa* to the sixth *kāṇḍa* Rāma figures only as a human hero, but of a nobler type, more magnanimous and illustrious than the ordinary human beings. Vālmīki also indicates to the readers that the gods will help the incarnate Rāma as vānaras. The poet refers to the vānaras through Syambhu who tells the gods and Gandharvas that they should form 'a powerful progeny of apes or monkeys'. The gods begin to procreate sons in the form of monkeys. This is also a novelty in the narrative that the vānaras of the *Rāmāyaṇa* are only gods and other celestials who have come to the earth to help Rāma. It is also to be remembered that after the battle with Rāvaṇa, Rāma particularly requests Indra to bring back all the dead vānaras to life.

So the future events are prophetically indicated and the suspense is maintained thoroughly throughout the epic. Only in the last section the poet reveals Rāma as Viṣṇu and Sītā as Lakṣmī through Brahmā, Agni and other gods. Apart from this prophetic indication, Rāma even at the age of sixteen, is taken away from Ayodhyā by Viśvāmitra, who exposes him to the arduous task of protecting the sacrifices from the Rākṣasas. Rāma also bends the stupendous bow and gets married to Sītā. Later in the *Bāla-kāṇḍa* itself Paraśurāma appears on the scene.

Daśaratha is a little worried for Rāma is of a tender age. But Paraśurāma realizes that Rāma is the Lord of the three worlds. He confesses, 'There is nothing to be ashamed of at my defeat in your hands. You withdraw that formidable shaft and let me repair to the Mahendra hill'. Paraśurāma accepts defeat and he recognizes

Rāma as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu. The *Bāla-kāṇḍa* closes with Rāma's victory over Paraśurāma. Vālmīki suggests that Rāma is an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu, mostly in the form of a prophecy. The prophecy is realised only in the sixth *kāṇḍa*, *Yudha-kāṇḍa*, that too in the last section of the epic. From the second *kāṇḍa* to the sixth *kāṇḍa*, Rāma is portrayed by Vālmīki as a great hero and an ideal king.

In the epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, we also find the tradition of writing that 'purports to be a revelation of phenomenon which transcend the world of ordinary reality'.[4] In the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* of the epic, the most domestic of all the six *kāṇḍas*, we find the various deeds of the major characters transcending the ordinary world of reality. Daśaratha gets Rāma declared as heir-apparent to the throne. On the morning of the ceremonial function when the people of Ayodhyā feel elated and supremely happy, Rāma comes to Daśaratha, but to his great dismay he sees him lying supine with Kaikeyī by his side. Rāma is puzzled and perplexed on seeing his father, disconsolate and unhappy. Kaikeyī dictates terms to Rāma. She tells Rāma that she can tell everything if he agrees to follow what the king may ask him to do. Rāma even without knowing Kaikeyī's stipulations agrees to accept her conditions. Kaikeyī wants Rāma to go into the forest for fourteen years and Bharata, her son, will be made the heir-apparent to the throne. Rāma accepts the verdict for he wants to honour his father's pledge to Kaikeyī.

Rāma's behaviour and his willingness to go to the forest that very day baffles everyone. Kausalyā, his mother, faints on the ground. Rāma consoles her. Then he requests her to permit him to go to the forest. He

tells his mother, 'Mother, it is beyond my power to disobey my father's orders. I request you by your feet, please permit me to repair to the forest'.

Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma's brother, feels that Rāma's installation cannot be prevented. He says, 'I shall send them to the forest for 14 years who have sanctioned your exile. I shall root out the hopes of the King and of Kaikeyī for the installation of Bharata'. Lakṣmaṇa expresses the sense of injustice being done to Rāma, apparently because of his frank nature. Lakṣmaṇa, is credited to be 'the most natural character among the heroes of the Rāmāyaṇa'.[5] But he comes under the influence of Rāma and accompanies him to the forest. Finally Lakṣmaṇa tells Rāma that he will follow him into the forest with bow in his hand for he cannot be separated from him. Lakṣmaṇa's decision to follow Rāma to the forest is another instance of happenings far beyond the world of reality.

Sītā's appeal to Rāma is a significant event in the epic. Rāma tries his best to dissuade Sītā from coming to the forest. But Sītā, the most devoted wife of Rāma, does not relish the idea of being separated from him. Sītā tells Rāma, 'I shall put an end to my life, please comply with my request, take me along with you and you will never feel inconveniences for that'. This is a lengthy scene where Sītā tries to convince Rāma that she has to follow him to the forest and Rāma somehow is hesitant to do that. Finally Rāma agrees to take Sītā with him to the forest.

These domestic events in the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* engage our attention. We feel that suffering for truth's sake is extraordinary. Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa choose to go

to the forest even though it is not obligatory from an ordinary viewpoint. Rāma's exemplary action in following *dharma* is emulated by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa.

Equally powerful and far remote from the events of the ordinary world is Bharata's suppliant request to Rāma to return to Ayodhyā and rule the kingdom. On reaching Ayodhyā Bharata is overpowered with grief. His father Daśaratha is dead and Kaikeyī has sent Rāma to the forest. So he starts for Citrakūṭa accompanied by the people of Ayodhyā, the priests of the palace, the three queens and several others only to request Rāma to return to Ayodhyā. He tries to impress on Rāma that it is his *rāja-dharma* to be the royal king and rule the kingdom. The priest Jābala tries to argue, but Rāma is firm in his resolve. Then Bharata appeals to Rāma, 'I do not crave for this kingdom, nor have I instigated mother for it, nor did I know that Rāma would have to take shelter in the woods. If it is decided by him to live here in obedience to father's mandate, then I shall live fourteen years in the forest as his substitute'. This exemplary behaviour of Bharata amazes Rāma. He tells the persons assembled there in Citrakūṭa, 'Nothing unjust has been done by Kaikeyī, nor father has done any wrong. I know Bharata, he is full of forgiveness and also full of respect towards the superiors. On my return from the forest, I shall share the kingdom with him'. This great scene of ethical idealism creates immense interest among heavenly saints and Gandharvas, and they praise both the brothers for their righteousness.

Rāma affectionately tells Bharata, 'Do your duty with the help of wise counsellors and friends'. Bharata finally carries Rāma's sandals and rules the kingdom from Nandigrāma as Rāma's sincere follower of *dharma*.

Vālmīki is at his best in portraying these characters of Rāma, Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and Bharata as exemplary and extraordinary, transcendent in their sensitiveness. To a large extent their actions and their attitudes to life, customs and behaviour reveal their glorious existence as supremely different from the world of reality. They are exquisitely presented as human beings of a nobler kind.

Rāma's readiness to help the *ṛṣis* in Daṇḍaka from the tyranny of the Rākṣasas reflects his sublime nature to help others. The moment Rāma comes to Daṇḍakāraṇya forest the *ṛṣis* imploringly beseech him to protect them. Rāma immediately promises all help to them. It looks as though the *ṛṣis* have been expecting Rāma's arrival for a long time. Sītā tells Rāma that he should not have been so hasty in promising help to the sages, as the Rākṣasas have not done any personal harm to them and especially when he is leading the life of an ascetic. But Rāma cannot break his own promise. Rāma's character is maintained in such a fashion that he is more than human, a greater man, a perfect man, who has come into this world for establishing *dharma*, righteousness.

Equally remarkable are Hanumān's exploits in Laṅkā in the *Sundara-kāṇḍa*. He shows himself to be a powerful foe of Rāvaṇa and he is all veneration for Sītā. Strangely enough Trijaṭā who is one of the Rākṣasīs guarding Sītā in the Aśoka forest consoles Sītā when she is full of apprehensions about Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa on the battlefield. Trijaṭā narrates her dream indicating that Rāma will defeat Rāvaṇa and Laṅkā will be submerged. Sītā promises a reward to Trijaṭā if her dream comes to be true. Even among the Rākṣasīs some feel attached to Sītā because of her piety. Vālmīki sees good even in things evil.

The *Yudha-kāṇḍa*, the sixth *kāṇḍa* of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, describes Rāma's triumphant victory over Rāvaṇa. From this moment of fulfilment, our expectations are raised when Rāma tells Vibhīṣaṇa to bring Sītā. This is a spectacular scene when the vānaras and the Rākṣasas expect the happy reunion of Rāma and Sītā. All expectations are belied when Rāma talks in a strange manner to Sītā that she can go to any place or to any person, and he no longer needs her.

This puts everyone to dismay, but none can talk to Rāma. Rāma looks 'formidable as death'. Jānakī tells Rāma, 'My name is Jānakī because I am connected with Janaka', but 'the Earth alone is my mother. Being unable to judge correctly, you have failed to comprehend my nature. You do not take into consideration why you did marry me in youth. My love and devotion now seem to be quite indifferent'. Sītā wants Lakṣmaṇa to prepare the funeral pyre. Sītā jumps into the fire for Rāma takes a chaste woman for a false one. She vows, 'if I be pure, let Agni protect me'.

This moving scene afflicts everyone. When they all expect a joyous reunion, they witness a sad spectacle. Vālmīki prepares the reader for a greater surprise. A few moments of unexpected grief is followed by the long expected revelation of the divinity of Rāma and Sītā. In conformity with apocalyptic poetry revelation is given, but in the most peculiar manner. Vālmīki brings all the gods above to declare that Rāma is Viṣṇu. As the gods come down they tell Rāma, 'You are Prajāpati himself. Thou art the Lord of the universe. .... There is no ruler above you. Thou art the eighth Mahādeva amongst the objects of adoration'.

But Rāma quickly says, 'I am the son of King Daśaratha and consider myself a human being and tell me what really I am'. Noble Rāma unlike Kṛṣṇa does not reveal himself as God. Vālmīki presents him mostly as a human being, but of a transcendent nature. Rāma in a modest manner wants to be informed about his nature. This gives an excellent opportunity to Vālmīki to bestow all the divine attributes on Rāma. In this lengthy passage Brahmā attributes all the divine elements and qualities to Rāma. Rāma is the embodiment of all divine and blessed elements in the world. It looks as though Rāma cult is introduced by Vālmīki through Brahmā. Brahmā gives a huge catalogue of Rāma's various names as a god supreme. Brahmā tells Rāma, 'Thou art self-revealing! Garuḍadhara holding conch, shaft and maze in hands. Thou art tusked Boar. Thou art the *Vedas* with their thousand branches. Thou art sacrifice. .... You have bowed down Bali and made Indra the king. Thou art Viṣṇu himself, you have assumed this human form for the destruction of Rāvaṇa. Rāvaṇa has been destroyed, now come back to the sphere of the gods. Unlimited are thy glory and prowess, and your devotees get everything that is desirable in this life and in the next'.

Vālmīki through the authoritative, sacred voice of Brahmā confers on Rāma, his original form of divinity as Viṣṇu. Very elaborately Brahmā mentions the godhead of Rāma and the benediction he gives to his devotees in this life and in the next one also. This is indeed a grand revelation.

Vālmīki gives another surprise to the reader by the revelation of Sītā's divinity. Rāma in the human form allows Jānakī to prove her chastity, but the gods above

protect her. Agni himself brings Jānakī out of the fire and presents her to Rāma as a woman who has always bestowed her love and affection on Rāma. In thought, word and deed Sītā's only prayerful wish is about Rāma. Agni, the lord of fire, tells Rāma, 'Since her (Sītā's) forcible abduction by Rāvaṇa she passed her days alone in silent sorrow for your separation. .... You are her only prop. Grim Rākṣasīs frightened her in various ways, oppressed her in different manners, but in her heart, there was not even the slightest thought of Rāvaṇa. Her heart is pure and she is absolutely sinless. Accept her now, I ask you to do so Don't suspect her even for a moment'. Brahmā tells Rāma that Jānakī is Lakṣmī.

Revelation is successfully given The suspense is over. Rāma is exceedingly pleased In a happy mood Rāma tells the gods, 'As light is inseparable from the sun, so she (Sītā) is inseparable from me. ... She is the purest in the three worlds. O, gods! you are adorable beings, and you speak just for my good. Now I shall protect her (Sītā) for ever'. The grand reunion of Rāma and Sītā, exemplars of monogamous marriage in the human sense, pleases everyone. Even to this day this scene is viewed with great devotion for Rāma and Sītā. Vālmīki's method of revealing the divinity of Rāma and Sītā only towards the close of the epic enhances the consummate joy of reading the epic with all its human predicaments and predilections. Culminating in divine exaltation, Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* has this singular phenomenon of elevating human Rāma into divine Rāma, an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu. The aesthetic pleasure is profound in seeing Rāma and Sītā united as Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī.

The epic closes on disclosing Rāma as an ideal king with his Rāma-rājya. This ideal kingdom refers to all

times and is the expectation of all ages. It signifies a future state of just administration and well-being of the people.

Along with the apocalyptic state of goodness, perfection and innocence that operates in the epic, we have vegetative images also, mostly based on spring and autumn.

Vālmīki takes delight in introducing the scenes of nature in all their glory. These descriptive accounts form a good background to the story and figure as a part of the apocalyptic tradition. Rāma's appreciation of the beautiful phenomenon of nature becomes more perceptible when he enters Citrakūṭa in the first year of his exile. He sees the Kiṃśuka flowers adorning the trees, making the forest look fiery red. He tells Jānakī, 'The tops and branches of the trees crowned with fruits and flowers, are swaying in the wind. It seems as if the hill itself is in dance. .... Look how host of flowers being moved by the breeze are kissing the crystal stream of Mandākinī. The sight of Citrakūṭa and Mandākinī appears much more delightful than city life. Citrakūṭa appeals to Rāma.

When Rāma moves to Daṇḍaka forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, they stay in Pañcavaṭī, the pastoral paradise for them. On the advice of Agastya they move to this place full of flower plants. Close to the cottage there is a tank full of sunlike flowers. Rāma likes the place with the river Godāvarī 'decked with flower trees, swans and ducks'.

Vālmīki introduces several beautiful images of nature. He describes the Pampā lake in the spring when

the water is clear and shines like sapphire. Trees like Jambū, Panasa, Plakṣa, Tinduka and Aśvattha grow near the lake.

In Kiṣkindha, in the autumn season, Rāma thinks of Sītā and the separation becomes oppressive. He tells Lakṣmaṇa, 'the Cakravākas have come from the Mānasa lake, their bodies are red with the pollen of the lotuses. .... Look, the topmost branches of the golden Asana trees are bent down with blossoms and sweet fragrance has filled the air'. Rāma waiting for Sītā is like the 'Cātaka bird anxious for drops of water from the clouds'. Rāma confesses, 'I am not feeling happy even at the sight of the hills, rivers and forests. She (Sītā) is most tender, so must have been greatly distressed by the grief of separation, and her sorrow will be greatly augmented by the autumn'. Rāma observes that the lotuses have bloomed under the rays of the sun .... the bees have resorted to the Saptaparṇa flowers, and the humming noise of the bees is carried by the winds'.

Vālmīki introduces the influence of nature on Rāma and Sītā especially after they move to the forest. The *Rāmāyaṇa* conforms to the pattern of apocalyptic poetry in its various aspects, of prophesying future events, of producing characters and situations transcendent and remote from the world of reality, and finally of presenting revelation. Also the epic is full of vegetative images, especially of spring and autumn.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* with its presentation of the essential relationship between nature and man in happiness and in misery acquires an imperishable significance of modernity and universality.

## REFERENCES

1. Leland Ryken, *Apocalyptic Vision in Paradise Lost*, p. 53.
2. This refers to the epic convention of accommodating the God of Scripture 'to man's understanding by being reduced to language which human intelligence can comprehend', ibid. p. 7.
3. ibid. p. 2.
4. ibid. p. 2.
5. Monier Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, p. 435.

# CHAPTER VI

# THE RĀMĀYAṆA HISTORIC REALISM AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

Vālmīki's Rāma figures mostly as a man, a great hero, an ideal king and a historical person. Brahmā himself blesses Vālmīki's epic, 'As long as the mountains and the seas exist on earth, the sacred history of the *Rāmāyaṇa* shall endure'. Brahmā calls the epic a history. Similarly Vālmīki closes the epic with a benediction, 'If anybody reads or adores this old history, he or she will be absolved from all sins and will enjoy longevity'. Vālmīki too refers to the epic as 'old history'. The epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa* must have been treated as a historical account at that time. In fact, 'the double relation of epic, to history on the one hand and to everyday reality on the other, emphasizes clearly two of its most important original functions'[1], as epic poetry.

There are critics who feel that 'the events of the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* may have been historical in some way'.[2] It is also held that 'Rāma story is an allegorical portrayal of these events, the Aryanization of South India'.[3] This is no doubt an extreme view, for the South did not require to be civilized by the Āryans. Rāma makes friendship with the vānaras and gets help from them. Vibhīṣaṇa gets Rāma's protection and helps him later. Vālmīki 'regards Rāma at the human level as a historical

figure in a general sense'.[4] Modern historical methods may not consider the events of the *Rāmāyaṇa* to be historical. Modern evaluation is totally different from that of the past in any country, not merely in India. Rāma is often viewed as a dynastic hero who 'promotes the ideal of *rāja-dharma* and presides over the ideal Indian kingdom'.[5] It is also said that the historical aspects of the story can be completely agreed. Rāma described by Vālmīki 'lived historically and performed all the deeds attributed to him'.[6] This view is often expressed by the modern critics. Equally valid is the contention that the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* is a later addition and not a part of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. The *Bāla-kāṇḍa* has some interpolations, but the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* is completely a spurious addition and has to be treated as an independent poem like the *Harivaṃśa*.

'The two Indian epics; the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are a solid contribution to historical literature. Even though the epics may not chronicle actual events as history does, they present the social, political and religious conditions of India existing upto 2nd and 3rd century A.D. The brahminical tradition 'maintains and inculcates the dignity, sanctity, supremacy and even superhuman characters of brahmans'.[7] The kṣatriya tradition comprises 'genealogies, tales, notices and allusions'.[8] The two traditions as found in the epics, the Purāṇas and the *Vedas* are of great significance in identifying famous kings and *ṛṣis* of the time. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* itself we have the genealogies of the Ikṣvāku and Videhi dynasties mentioned in the epic at the time of Rāma's marriage with Sītā. Viśvāmitra comments on that occasion, 'No other clan can be compared with that of Ikṣvāku or Videhi' *(Bāla-kāṇḍa)*. Kings like Hariścandra, Sagara, Daśaratha and Rāma of Ayodhyā,

Duṣyanta, Bharata, Ajāmīḍha, Kuru and Saṁvaraṇa among Pauravas engage our attention. The Vaśiṣṭas seem to be hereditary priests of Ayodhyā. The historical tradition of the Vedic literature is presumed to be authentic and realistic. It may be concluded that the fundamental theme of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, that is to say 'the war of the Āryan Rāma against the Rākṣasas ... ought to be regarded as real and historical'.[9]

Daśaratha and Rāma are remembered in the *Ṛgveda* as the kings of an illustrious dynasty. Vālmīki presents Rāma as an exalted person unrivalled in his personal qualities. In any age or in any country, east or west, Rāma and Sītā symbolize the highest form of marriage ties and human relationships. Rāma is more relevant than Kṛṣṇa to an ordinary man, for he does not preach. The deeper mysteries of Kṛṣṇa are far beyond the comprehension of the common man.

While Vālmīki has presented Rāmarāja as a man with rare virtues, later ages have given different pictures of Rāma. The *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* shows Rāma as a God, as Nirguna-brahman. Tulasī Dās in his *Rāmacarita-mānas* presents Rāma as a devotional Lord. Rāma is not just a symbol of God, he is the Lord of the devotees. Tulasī Dās stresses the need for *bhakti*. These are the variations of Rāma that have come into existence due to the great epic on Rāma. But Vālmīki's Rāma is still lovable as a great hero and an ideal king. Rāma and Sītā are loved mostly because of their human perfection as exemplars of monogamous marriage and conjugal affection. They are historic in their significant appeal to the Indians even to-day.

Even Rāvaṇa is given his due as a ruler well versed in the *Vedas*. Rāvaṇa is supposed to be an Āndhra. 'The men at this period were known as Yakṣas or Rākṣasas'[10] and their language was Telugu. Rāvaṇa is also considered to be of the Goud tribe. Much of the island ruled by Rāvaṇa is submerged. Still reference is made to a paddy field between Welimade and Hakgale where Rāvaṇa fell while fighting with Rāma.[11] Laṅkā stood for the city and the island. The last Āndhra king Jutīndra was defeated by Vijayasiṃha and thereafter Laṅkā was called Siṃhala. Laṅkā was situated in the Trikoṭa (three peaked hills) jutting out from the southern ocean. The Rākṣasas also occupied Janasthāna, a place in lower Godāvarī valley. References are made to places like the Sītākuṇḍa (Sītā's pond), Sītāvāka or Sītāvāḍa where Indrajit, the son of Rāvaṇa beheaded a figure like Sītā to put Rāma to grief. Sītātalā (Sītā's place) is another place identified with Sītā. With such historical evidence of the war in Laṅkā, we cannot possibly ignore the existence of Rāma, Rāvaṇa and several other heroes of that war. We cannot dismiss the epic as a myth or an allegory.

However, there are other views negating the war in Laṅkā. The whole story is considered to be an exaggerated fable. .... Laṅkā is supposed to be nothing but some place near Chota Nagpur.[12] The bridge across the sea is equally fantastic. The characters are viewed as 'merely personifications of certain occurrences and situations'.[13] But peculiarly enough the story of Rāma and his great battle with Rāvaṇa is accepted as something significant and notable not only in India but also in many of the Asiatic countries. So it is difficult to agree with all these innovative ideas, however novel they may be. The only difficulty is about

Vālmīki's references to vānaras and Rākṣasas as though they are less civilized than the Āryans. In the *Bāla-kāṇḍa*, vānaras are shown as gods in disguise to help Rāma, the incarnate Viṣṇu. Apparently Vālmīki does not have much knowledge about the tribes in South India. The Rākṣasas, Asuras, Daityas, Yakṣas, Dānavas, all these tribes are not much different from each other and they are highly civilized. So the war is between two possible races, differing in origin, civilization and worship. Rāma the ideal king, brings the vānaras, Rākṣasas and other tribes closer to each other. India for the first time assumes the position of a nation with some relationship between the South and the North under the leadership of noble Rāma and his ideal kingdom Rāma-rājya. Historically speaking, Rāma becomes the innovator of a greater civilization by blending together Āryan, Vānara and Rākṣasa cultures in India.

So the story of Rāma serves as 'a paradigm, an expression of a classical archetype and itself the archetype for future thought and action'.[14] Vālmīki makes human Rāma divine Rāma only after the death of Rāvaṇa. The story of Rāma and Sītā becomes realistic despite all the incongruities that may abound in the epic. Rāvaṇa too is a human being, but he is sometimes found with ten heads and twenty hands. The Rākṣasas could take any form they liked and Rāvaṇa might have purposely shown himself to be a grotesque person only to frighten the *ṛṣis*. Sītā curses Rāvaṇa when he tries to molest her. She says, 'Wretch, why not your two eyes, hideous and cruel fall to the ground?' When Indrajit dies Rāvaṇa's two eyes become redder. These references only show that Rāvaṇa is a human being.

The epic is comprehensive in its characterization. In exhibiting pictures of domestic life and manners, the Sanskrit epics are supposed to be more true and real than the Greek and Roman epics. Apart from being a historical account, the *Rāmāyaṇa* like Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* is sacred poetry where God functions as a speaking character. All the three epics refer to God's ways and the essential justice involved in them. Vālmīki's Rāma may appear as a human being, but of such an exalted nature that what he does is beyond human endeavour and expectations. The *Rāmāyaṇa* being a sacred book 'serves not only as a reflection of ethical values, but the source of values for the succeeding generations'.[15]

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is a 'contemporary book, a master guide to good life'.[16] Rāma and his Rāma-rājya have more relevance to the modern age than the ethical teaching of Kṛṣṇa. Rāma rājya, the ideal kingdom on earth, 'is conceived at a time when religious observances are fruitfully observed and when Rāma performed many sacrifices'.[17] That was an auspicious time when social harmony prevailed and people lived in peace. It was a golden age of golden deeds. Rāma's Rāma-rājya is like Milton's vision of a millennium, a golden age, as he expresses in the concluding section of Book XII, *Paradise Lost*. Milton dreams of

> New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
> Founded in righteousness, and peace and love,
> To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.

His vision is that of a righteous world where people live in joy and bliss. Our concept of Rāma-rājya and *rāja-dharma* are still the desirable goals for a righteous kingdom. Rāma and his kingdom seem to have more

relevance to this world than Kṛṣṇa and the salvation he brings, for they have greater appeal to the ordinary man than the philosophical preaching of Kṛṣṇa. The epic *Rāmāyaṇa* concentrates only on three aspects of life, *dharma, artha* and *kāma*, it does not refer to *mokṣa*. A good life lived well in peace is more significant to the epic poet, than the earning of salvation.

Vālmīki closes the epic with a historical perspective. The two phrases, 'surpassing the dimensions of realism' and 'including history' aptly refer to the *Rāmāyaṇa* as an epic. Vālmīki describes Rāma-rājya, 'During his (Rāma's) reign ..... there was no fear of ferocious animals, and diseases were unknown. The whole principality was free from robbers and thieves. Nobody suffered in any way during his rule, and the aged had not to perform funeral rites of the young. Nobody is tempted to do any violence to anybody out of their respect and love for Rāma. People lived into one thousand years and had number of children. Everyone was healthy and free from disease, and trees always brought forth fruits and flowers. God Parjanya rained sufficient rains and the wind blew sweet. Everyone was pleased with his own state and followed his own vocation. None spoke falsehood and everyone had an auspicious look'. This is Vālmīki's glorious picture of the golden age. Rāma's rule is given to social welfare, freedom from want and a general feeling of material gains. All these aspects of Rāma-rājya become relevant in any age. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is not of an age, but of all ages.

Rāma's kingship is governed by *dharma* and his rule is for the benevolence of the people. The epic describes Rāma's deeds vividly. The Ahalyā episode, Paraśu-rāma's confession of Rāma's prowess, Guha's willing

submission to Rāma, Śabarī's devotion to Rāma, Hanumān's reverence and Agastya's fondess for Rāma, all these refer to Rāma's human relationships and his exalted nature in which truth, goodness and perfection harmoniously mingle. Rāma becomes the saviour of *dharma* and righteousness in the world. Throughout the epic we find Rāma magnanimous in everything he does. He is like the perfect man of the world whose role throughout history is to lead his people by his example. Rāma's abiding interest in good government makes him the innovator of a political theology as reflected in the establishment of Rāma-rājya.

Equally relevant to all ages is Rāma's concept of a monogamous marriage. The epic presents interesting pictures of human life and manners in ancient times. This institution of monogamy is respected all over the world. Especially 'Hindu wives are generally perfect patterns of conjugal fidelity'.[18] Vālmīki presents Rāma as a pious and virtuous man, a model son, husband, brother, friend and protector. Rāma symbolizes Rāma the man, the successor to Indra, and the *avatāra* of Viṣṇu.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is a sacred poem. It presents the people's values and insists on ethical idealism. The epic glorifies human life through its central characters, Rāma and Sītā. The story serves as an expression of a classical archetype. In fact 'it is the religious element of the Indian epics that constitutes one of the picturesque features of contrast in comparing them with the Homeric epics'.[19] Mostly through the epics Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are elevated to a divine nature. Later ages have deified them finding in them superhuman qualities of justice, truth and wisdom. If Buddha, known to us as a man,

can be deified, we need not be surprised that Rāma and Kṛṣṇa have been deified.

Rāma is still loved and venerated as an exemplary type of man and an ideal king. Rāma with his ideal of righteous kingship is still respected. Rāma is the first noble king to introduce the wider concept of nationalism by bringing together the cultures of the North and the South into a happy, political understanding. Vālmīki shows the *dharmapatha*, the path of *dharma*, and his epic is a vision presenting the dream of perfection. The epic is full of ethical idealism and is relevant for all times. It can reasonably be affirmed that 'no product of Sanskrit literature has enjoyed a greater popularity in India down to the present day than the *Rāmāyaṇa*'.[20] The prophecy that as long as the mountains and the rivers survive, the Rāmāyaṇa will endure, is abundantly fulfilled.

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13. B. Weber, *The History of Indian Literature*, p. 192.
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16. ibid. p. 42.
17. Frank Whaling, *The Rise of the Religious Significance of Rama*, p. 69.
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# REVIEWS

श्रीश्रीरूपगोस्वामिप्रभुपादप्रणीतः श्रीश्रीभक्तिरसामृतसिन्धुः [*Śrīśrī-Bhaktirasāmṛta-sindhu* by Śrīśrī-Rūpagosvāmi-prabhudāsa]. [Edited and tr. into Hindi by] Premalathā Śarmā. Pub. jointly by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi and Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, Delhi. 1998. Pp. lxviii + 564. Price: Rs. 850=00.

*Bhakti* 'devotion', or otherwise called *upāsanā*, is nothing but 'continuous meditation' (*dhyāna*) of the god (cf. Rāmānuja: *evaṃrūpā dhruvānusmṛtir eva bhaktiśabdenābhidhīyate, upāsanā-paryāyatvād bhaktiśabdasya, Śrībhāṣya*, 1.1.1), and it is evolved by degrees of modified modalities in ritual from *tapas* 'penance' - one of the six fundamental principles of Vedic ritual (as mentioned in the *Atharva-veda*, 12.1.1 and *Maitrāyaṇīya-saṃhitā*, 4.14.11: *satyaṃ bṛhad ṛtam ugraṃ dīkṣā tapo brahma yajñaḥ pṛthivīṃ dhārayanti*). The continuous meditation, which is nothing but Bhakti, of the god occurs only when some sort of relationship with the God permeates in the mind of the devotee. Thus every action performed by the devotee during each day should have a direct reference to the god. So all the sentiments experienced in one's own life appear as manifestations of Bhakti.

*Nāmasaṃkīrtana* 'repeating/singing the name of the god', *bhajan* 'repeat the name in chorus', *kīrtana* 'singing the glory of the god', composing and reading of poems in ecstasy of devotion constitute various modes to get the highest degree of proficiency in *dhyāna*. Not only a class of compositions called '*bhakti* literature', but also the '*bhakti* rhetoric' emerged with rules or principles

underlying all effective *bhakti* compositions. The *bhakti* rhetorics are indeed modelled on the available paradigms in the Alaṅkāra-śāstra. One of such exercises is the *Śrīśrībhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* of Śrī Rūpagosvāmī, the disciple of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu - the expounder of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism (*gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-sampradāya*). The supramundane experience of *Bhakti* is the ultimate goal (2.244) and hence *Bhakti* in this form is the ultimate *rasa* 'sentiment'. In its mundane experience, the same *Bhakti* manifests itself diversely. Of these there are five principal *rasas*, namely Śānta, Prīta, Preyān (sakhya), Vatsala and Madhura, and there are seven secondary *rasas*, namely, Hāsya, Adbhuta, Vīra, Karuṇa, Raudra, Bhayānaka and Bībhatsa. Around these sentiments the whole book is developed with various features like varieties of *Bhakti* and *bhaktas* and their *vibhāva, anubhāva, sāttvika* and *vyabhicāri bhāvas.*

The theme of the book had its origin in Brīndavan around the Śrī Govinda temple of Mathurā - the Vrāja-bhūmi. The area in and around Mathurā was a cultural centre for over centuries attracting people from all parts of India. The Govindadēva temple with Lord Kṛṣṇa as the focal point served as the central place for socio-cultural movement . Thus Śrīkṛṣṇa is the supreme god and the illustrations are from such works like the *Bhāgavata, Nārada-pañcarātra* and *Yāmunācāryastotra.* Apart from the exposition of *Bhakti*, this book gives information about socio-religious customs of the people in general and Vaiṣṇavas in particular.

The present edition is based on eight earlier editions published in Bengal and elsewhere. To help those who do not have adequate knowledge in Sanskrit, prose order (*anvaya*) was given for each verse in Sanskrit. A lucid Hindi translation, which could be understood even by non-Hindi speakers, was provided by the editor of the edition, Premalatha Sarma. Two appendixes are added. The appendix *Pāṭhavimarśa* is the critical apparatus with variant readings found in different editions, and the appendix *vimarśa* is an exegetical notes on several illustrations providing necessary contextual background so as to appreciate the relationship of the rule with its illustration. The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts should also take up translating the basic works of this type into other Indian Languages too, which vouch for the uninterrupted continuation of the cultural heritage.

DEVĪ - GODDESSES OF INDIA. Ed. by John Stratton Hawley and Donna Marie Wulff. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 41, U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi - 110 007. 1998 (Rpt. First Indian edn.). Pp. xiv + 352. Price. Rs. 295=00 (Cloth); Rs. 195=00 (Paper).

The *Devī - Goddesses of India* is a collection of papers on the various forms of the feminine deities, which emerged from the local tradition and got universalized with enfoldment of a fairly common conception, legend and ritual against the background of Śaivism and Viṣṇuism. Visualization and symbolization of the energy, effulgence, glory, creation and even delusion and disease as feminine in gender, perhaps through the attribution of the grammatical gender to the words expressing those features, led to the emergence of village deities (*grāma-devatās*), which in their turn ascended to the status of consorts to the male deities, to match with the Vedic concept of 'unification' (*mithuna*) known from the sacrificial tradition. The goddesses Santoṣī Mā, Gaṅgā Mātā Mahāmāyā Vindhyavāsinī, Kālī, Śrī, Rādhā, Saraṇyu, Serāṅvālī, Bhagavatī, Satī, and Bhārat Mātā are some of the examples which have been discussed in this book. The legend, esoteric significance ascribed under the sacrificial and philosophical associations, evolution of the ritual during the Bhakti movement of each goddess is given in detail. A careful mythologization of the vivid descriptions of different deities reveals the role played by legend to preserve the core Āryan concept of nature worship in tact through centuries till today. Further the strong monotheistic religio-philosophical concept is demonstrated by similarities in the legends and associations of the goddesses with different gods, as in the case of Gaṅgā Mātā with Śiva and Viṣṇu alike.

John Stratton Hawley, Donna Marie Wulff, Thomas B. Coburn, Cynthia Ann Humes, David R. Kinsky, Vasudha Narayanan, Diana L. Eck, Wendy Doniger, Kathleen M. Erndl, Sarath Caldwell, Lindsey Harlan, Lise Mckean and Rachel Fell Mc Dermott - all working in America in different departments of Anthropology, Religious Studies, History of Religions, Comparative Religion and Culture - have tried their best to give an impressive and useful presentation in historical, social and anthropological perspectives with common commitment. There are also very drastic and

sweeping remarks which attract reexamination with an Indian eye and in Indian ethos. For example Kinsley observes on page 83: "But the Hindu saṃskāras are patterned on wishful thinking". "As anthropogonies, these stories are saying that the primeval children, our ancestors, were abandoned by their mother" (Wendy Doniger on p.170). "Although most people denied any direct relation between the sexual desires of virgins (or any other female emotions) and the nature of Bhagavatī, George's statements imply that the public worship of the virgin Kālī in Kerala reveals in part an attempt to resolve concern about female sexuality" (Sarah Caldwell on p. 213). There are also some statements on contemporary situation, e.g. on p. 257 Lice Mekean gives an assessment of VHP: "The VHP also raised money by selling small pots of Ganges water ... The VHP's Bhārat Mātā temple in Hardwar, like the sacrifice for unity, provides a means both to popularize Hindu nationalist ideology and to raise money for movement" (p.257-8).

The present anthology of essays on the female goddesses is a rich contribution to the studies in Indian culture. Narendra Prakash Jain of Motilal Banarsidass Publishers deserves appreciation for bringing out this Indian reprint of the American edition published in 1996, for the benefit of readers in India.

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LIVING IN GOD. [By] Roy Eugene Davis. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 41, U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi - 110 007. 1998 (Rpt. First Indian edn.). Pp. 159. Price: Rs. 195=00 (Cloth); Rs. 95=00 (Paper).

There are always solutions to several problems, most of which are creations of mind. They are indeed evolved from within of those people who can intentionally choose 'a wholesome life style sustained by a clear sense of meaningful purpose'. The psychological impulses are too many and irresistible to carry out acts of undeserving nature. As Roy Eugene Davis observes, the approach to spiritual growth becomes effective when the way chosen is most compatible with the psychological temperament (p. 113). This can be possible only by keeping together the body, mind and soul. Soul is always pure and shines within, but its vision is

obstructed by the acts of body and mind. They can be trained by voluntarily undergoing discipline. All along the cultural history of India, various saints and godsmen suggested several ways and means to discipline body and mind. Roy Eugene Davis, a disciple of Paramahaṃsa Yogānanda (Los Angeles, California), evolved a programme of exercise to body and mind through Yoga and refreshment of mind with constructive thoughts.

To enliven the mind, one has to recapitulate time and again the role of one's own self in the society and in the domain of god. He developed 366 themes for daily meditative contemplation, which contain several codes of conduct which are to be observed to discipline the mind and avert the possible distractions like 'I-ness' or ego. One theme has to be read each day, meditated upon and adapted to the best advantage. For example for July 2 he writes:

> When praying for others, always selflessly pray for their highest good rather than for specific results. Do not endeavor to use will power to cause effects, or think that you know what is best for someone else. Avoid attempts to mentally manipulate or control others. Pray with a pure mind and a pure heart for the spiritual awakening and fulfilment of those for whom you pray. Have faith that your prayers are influential (p. 83).

In his 366 themes, Davis has covered all the psychologically weak attitudes of the people which lead them to misery and recommended methods to be adapted by the aspirants themselves from within. Davis has efficiently touched upon several Indian Philosophical concepts and connected them to practicality in the modern society.

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THE DIVINE LIFE OF SRI SRI SITARAMDAS OMKAR NATH [By] C. Varadarajan. Akhil Bharat Jai Guru Sampradaya, Mahamilan Nath, 7/7, P.W.D. Road, Calcutta - 700 035. Pp. [vii] + iii + 87. Price: Rs. 60.00: US $ 5.00.

It is a biography of a brahmin boy called Prabodh Chandra Chattopadhyaya who turned into a great saint of India with the new name Sitaramdas Omkarnath - a significant nomenclature matching to his non-sectarian and classless Hindu religious practice called Akhil Bharat Jaiguru Sampradaya. His life is an example of how a *guru* 'teacher, master' is needed for a devotee to lead from ignorance to knowledge and to alleviate grief and mundane sufferings. He set himself as an example both as a disciple and as a teacher by his conduct and teachings. He emerged ultimately as a model of the god in human form.

We find here and there, and in all times superhuman personalities of high leadership qualities to make others to emulate them by word, action and thought. Let the language they speak be different, but they give the same message based on abandonment of greed and earnestness to share the sufferings of others.

Sitaramdas was born at Keota, a small village in the district of Hooghly of West Bengal on the 17th February, 1892 and shed his mortal body on the 6th December 1982, while his disciples were engaged in *nāmasaṃkīrtanam* 'singing the name (of the god)' at his Jaiguru Sampradāya Ashram in Mahamilan, Calcutta.

The Master had his own way of life, which was shrouded from his childhood with innumerable difficulties, pain, disease and bereavements. In 1973, he formed his new sect with the name: Akhil Bharat Jaiguru Sāmpradāya. "It is a school of religious association without any sectarian view, without any critical review of any sect or path followed by other religious sects (p. 84)". It is indeed a blend of *sanātanadharma* with modern religions like Christianity and Islam. Thus he enjoyed the association of disciples hailing from different parts of the country and from different isms and sects.

He holds that there are two types of initiation. One type is called *kriyāvatī dīkṣā*, in which the *guru* shows the way and the disciple has to work for himself with his own efforts to obtain the goal. The other is the *siddhiyoga* in which the teacher transmits his power to his deserving disciple and makes him fit spontaneously to obtain the fruits of the Yoga, namely the realization of consciousness.

Another contribution of the saint is the propagation of *nāmasaṃkīrtana* 'singing the glory of the lord' in the form of *bhajan* 'repeating the name of the god time and again uninterruptedly' and 'writing the name of the god on paper' as necessary rituals. He held that *śrīrāma* is the right *mantra* for obtaining the religious merit and hence he is called Sītārāmdas. By repeating the name, which is a manifested form of Vāk 'speech', one would purify himself and finally listen the sound *om*, or *oṃkāra* and enters into *samādhi*, which is the target of the initiation. Hence he is also called Oṃkārnāth.

The biographer C. Varadarajan is a man of varied experiences, for being born in Karnataka, worked in Bengal and settled in Andhra and served as a lecturer in English and an administrative executive. He is evidently successful in presenting his understanding of the master in clear expression. Simplicity in language matched with sincerity of the writer, made the biography interesting and inspiring.

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हिन्दी के महावीर प्रबन्ध काव्यों का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन [Hindi] [By] Divyaguṇāśrī. Śrī Munisuvratasvāmī Jain Mandir, Dādāsāhebanā Pagalām. Navarangapura, Ahmedabad - 380 009. Pp. 12 + 275. Price: Free of cost.

In the present monograph Divyaguṇāśrī has taken ten *kāvyas* written in Hindi on Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the 24th Jain Tīrthaṅkara. These poems while narrating the story of Mahāvīra describe the tenets of Jainism. Hence these books can be examined from the points of view of both philosophy and literary criticism. So Divyaguṇāśrī discusses in brief, the life of Mahāvīra, the Jaina Philosophy, some sociological problems like position of women, institution of marriage, social conditions, law and order, financial status of the state, etc., from the points of view of philosophy and religion. She has also discussed about the *śabdaśakti, chandas, alaṅkāras*, etc., from the point of view of literary criticism. This small book of 258 pages is written in Hindi, which can be understood by any one who is interested in knowing the subject. Divyaguṇāśrī deserves hearty approbation.

JAINA PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION [English translation of *Jaina Darśana* by Muni Shri Nyayavijayaji]. Tr by Nagin J Shah Pub jointly by Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Bhogilal Lehar Chand Institute of Indology & Mahattara Sadhvi Shree Mrigavatiji Foundation Motilal Banarsidass, 41, U A Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007 Pp. xxvi + 469. Price Rs 450=00

To be free from the defilements of *karma* as the ultimate aim of religion leading to the philosophical goal of liberation is the common foundation for all the schools of Indian philosophy The philosophers differ theoretically on the nature of human action and its emancipation to generate conviction and adherence to the order among their followers Thus revisions become necessary to their presentations by updating the arguments The book under review is an English translation by Nagin J Shah of Muni Śrī Nyayavijayaji's *Jaina Darśana* written in Gujarati Sri Nyayavijayaji (A D 1870-1970) was an erudite scholar in Sanskrit and had to his credit nearly thirty works in Sanskrit The *Jain Darśana* is his *magnum opus* in Gujarati, in which, as we know form the lucid English translation, he dealt with all the salient features of and also strong points of the Jaina philosophy Several minor issues which were discussed scatteredly in dialectic deliberations were systematized in this book Thus it assumes an additional value of a book of quick reference on Jainism

Beginning with the derivation of the terms *jina* and *jaina*, the Muni has dealt with the human soul, its relation to the world and God, and the nature of liberation and the type of life style needed to lead to liberation (*mokṣa*). The cycle of birth and death depends on soul's bondage with *karma*, which arises because of attachment, aversion and delusion It demands a course of life to be free from the defilements of *karmas* which could be undertaken only after due consideration of the worldly affairs and with conviction. The Jaina path of liberation comprises purification of the soul by right knowledge (*samyakjñāna*), right conduct (*samyakcarita*), spiritual discipline (*dharma*), refraining from violence (*prānātipātaviramana*), refraining from lying (*mrsāvādaviramana*), abstaining from taking anything that is not given (*adattādānaviramana*), refraining from all illicit sexual contacts (*maithunaviramana*), limiting of

possessions (*parigrahaparimāna*), limiting of the area of one's unvirtuous activities (*digvrata*), limiting of the quantity of things one will use (*bhogopabhogaparimāna*), abstaining from purposeless harmful activities (*anarthadandavıramana*), remaining completely equanimous for a fixed period of time (*sāmayika*), the austerities like reducing the limits of the area for a limited period (*deśāvakāśika-vrata*), observing fast and living like a monk for certain days (*poṣadha-vrata*) and sharing with deserving guests (*atıthisamvıbhāga-vrata*).

Nagin J. Shah has provided a very lucid English version of the *Jaina Darśana* through this translation

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WOMEN'S ROLE IN KŪDIYĀṬTAM. By L.S. Rajagopalan. The Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, 84, Thiru Vi. Ka Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004. 1997. Pp xxxvi + 224. Price: Rs 250=00.

L S Rajagopalan has dexterously delineated the role played by women in the stage performance of Kūḍiyāṭṭam, a Keralite performing art besides Kathakali Patañjali attests the existence of the actresses playing the female roles with the examples: *nartakikā*, *nartaki-tamā* and *nartaki-tarā* under the rule Pāṇ. 6.3.42: *pumvat karmadhārayajātīyadeśīyesu*. Pānini's rules 3.1.145 *śılpını svun*, 4 1.41: *ṣidgaurādıbhyaś ca* and 6.3.43: *gharūpakalpacelaḍbruvagotramatahatesu nyo 'nekāco hrasvaḥ* attest the derivation of the word *nartakī* given in the *Kāśikā*, 4.1.41. Various evidences are also available, as given in the Introduction, to confirm the practice of employing women in performing arts. But in course of time, perhaps because of changed socio-political compulsions, women roles came to be played by men and this came into vogue in many parts of the country as in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. A revival was attempted with a certain amount of success in this century by several exponents of performing arts to reintroduce women to the stage Vallathol is one standing example in Kerala.

Rajagopalan took to study the social barriers for active involvement of women in Kūḍiyāttams in which women can

participate as actresses besides singers' The *Āttaprakārams* 'acting manuals give details of the events and directions as to how different roles are to be acted by actors as well as actresses on the stage A female actor is called *nangyar* In the Kūḍiyāṭṭam, the acting nangyar performs *abhinaya* silently showing the *mudrās*, while the singing *nangyar* sings the verse plying cymbals Many a verse from different sources are incorporated into the main text and thus the show is extended spreading over to several days Here the author has given all the relevant verses for which *abhinaya* is made by actresses along with stage directions The kūḍiyāttams discussed in this book are the *Śūrpanakhānkam* (the 2nd act of *Āścaryacūḍāmani* of Śaktibhadra), the first act of the *Subhadrādhanañjaya* of Kulaśekhara Varma, the fifth act of the *Subhadrādhanañjaya*, and the *Nangyārkūttu* t *Nangyārkūttu* is a distinct type of Kūḍiyāttam, in which the *Śrikrsna-caritam* is enacted extending from the life of the king Ugrasena upto the building up of Dvārakā occurring in the Xth *Skandha* of the *Bhāgavata.* Originally it was the opening scene of the 2nd act of the *Subhadrādhanañjaya*, as a *nirvahana* 'flash back' But it was treated as a separate Kūḍiyāttam because its size swelled to the *abhinaya* of 217 Sanskrit verses The speciality of this performance is that the *abhinaya* of all the 217 verses and of all the characters is to be done only by one actress It is indeed a masterly task to be executed by a profound female artist This Nangyārkūttu was originally staged in a cremation ground and slowly shifted to some temples in Kerala

The problems faced by this performing art of Kūḍiyāttam in general and by the actresses in particular are discussed vividly in this monograph, demanding measures of redress and patronage to promote traditional arts

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RAMAYANA [BY] G C Asnani 822, Sindh Colony, Aundh, Pune-411 007 Pp vii+iii+133, 1996 Selections from Hindu Scriptures, Series No 2 Price Rs 15=00, US $ 1 50

The Indian epic tradition laid an indelible impression on the litterateur, rhetorician and connoisseur that theme of any literary product of any standard should be by first preference from the

*Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. The monotony or repetition is removed by the poet by recasting or modifying the episodes and characters to obtain variety, purposiveness and contemporaneity of the incidents to the times of the poet. For reasons of their value in preserving Indian code of conduct, the same trend was set in the literatures of Indian vernaculars and also English. G.C. Asnani in his *Rāmāyaṇa* has chosen to retell in English the episode of immigration of Rāma to the forest along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa in ten stories. All the ten stories are centred round on two concepts, namely values of relationships within a family and 'duties and rights' of citizens in a society. The narration ends up with one ideology called *nyāsa*, according to which Rāma remains to be the king of Ayodhyā domiciling in the forest and Bharata becomes a custodian of the kingdom for fourteen years. Asnani has retold the story in a very simple and effective language without loosing the expression of different shades of human relationships for the benefit of those who do not have access to the original text.

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ŚRAUTA-PRĀYAŚCITTAVIDHI (Sanskrit text with English tr.) Ed.& tr. by A. Ramulu. Sri Rama Nama Kshetram, Jagadevpur 502 281, Medak Dt., A.P. Pp. xiv+104, 1989, Price. Rs. 18.00.

A STUDY OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BHĀṬṬA AND PRĀBHĀKARA SCHOOLS (MĪMĀṂSĀ). A. Ramulu, Sri Rama Nama Kshetram, Jagadevpur. Pp. xv+184. 1995., Price: Rs. 52:00.

Vedic ritual involves a series of actions synchronizing with men, materials, prayers, time and space. Inadvertently or intentionally, human error in the ritual is inevitable. To avert the befall of unseen evil, the result of the wrong action is to be obliterated and the lapsed right action is to be ensured and this is called *prāyaścitta* 'expiation' (*vinaṣṭasandhānam*). Therefore in all the Kalpasūtra works, *prāyaścitta* necessarily accompanies the *vidhi*. The tradition has become so strong that even in the Āgamic rituals of the temples and in the Dharmaśāstra, with regard to the noncognizable offences, the *prāyaścitta* finds its place. Lapses are likely to occur in all cases of the ritual in which human element is involved;

e.g. selection of time, place, men, materials and procedures. There could be some lapses because of the nature as for example a dog passes through the space between the sacred fires.

The expiation rites can be simple or as complicated as the original ritual. The books on expiatory rites are manuals for specialized and quick use. Hence they are mostly of limited scope. For example the book under review is a manual of expiatory rites to be performed in the Agnyādhāna, Agnihotra, Darśapūrṇamāsa and Paśubandha (for further details see: C.G. Kashikar, *Prāyaścitta - A Vārāha-pariśiṣṭa*, SVUOJ. vol. 32-34, 1989-91, pp. 333-376). Ramulu has done his best in editing the text on the basis of two manuscripts and providing an English translation.

A study of differences between Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara schools is a good attempt by Ramulu to record the differences in points of view with regard to the epistemological and ontological categories between the two prominent schools of Mīmāṃsā, which emerged contemporaneously in the seventh century A.D.

The author has dealt with all the major issues from the valid means of knowledge to the concept of liberation (*apavarga*). He adapted the system of categorization and classification of the items which was synthetically systematized through centuries in the Sāṃkhya and Nyāyavaiśeṣika systems of philosophy and followed also by the traditional Mīmāṃsakas like Nārāyāṇa Bhaṭṭatiri and Gāgābhaṭṭa in their *prakaraṇa-granthas* 'primers' on Mīmāṃsā. Thus the work is very interesting and also providing an easy reading. Now what is further needed is to examine each item in a historical perspective so as to understand the compulsions of each exponent demanding several modifications to save the doctrine.

The book under review fulfils the basic requirement of an earnest researcher, who would like to examine the evolution of the differences diachronically, which is certainly an enterprising enterprise, for the diverging and converging points bring home the needs and challenges of various schools.

The author has also given some interesting and unauthenticated episodes like the encounter of Kumārila with Prabhākara. Here it may be suggested that the reading *atra api na uktaṃ tatra tu na uktam iti dviḥ uktam* (p. v) may be printed as *atra apinā uktam tātra tunā iti dviḥ uktam*, for sharpening the contrast in the argument.

*M. Srimannarayana Murti*

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(Sd) *M. Srimannarayana Mur*
*Publishe*

# *OUR CONTRIBUTORS*


| | |
|---|---|
| Dr. Hukam Chand Patyal | Reader<br>Sanskrit Dictionary Project<br>Deccan College<br>Pune - 411 006 |
| Dr. G.C. Nayak | Formerly Vice-Chancellor<br>S.J.S.V., Puri, and<br>Professor of Philosophy<br>Utkal University<br>N-4/215, IRC Village, Nayapalli<br>Bhubaneswar - 751 015 |
| Dr. M.V. Rama Sarma | Formely Professor of English &<br>Vice Chancellor,<br>Sri Venkateswara University<br>Kapilateertham Road<br>Tirupati - 517 507 |
| Dr. C. Rajendran | Professor of Sanskrit<br>University of Calicut<br>Calicut University P.O.<br>673 635 - Kerala |
| Sri D. Satyanarayana | Formerly Librarian,<br>Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha<br>Satyasadan, 18-3-56A<br>Santi Nagar, K.T. Road<br>Tirupati - 517 501 |

Dr. (Mrs) Sindhu S. Dange
Formely R.G. Bhandarkar
Professor of Sanskrit
University of Bombay
'Girnar', Gokhale Road
Mulund (E)
Bombay - 400 081

Dr. Sreeramula Rajeswara Sarma
Formerly Professor of Sanskri
C-31, Zakir Bagh
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh - 202 002

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